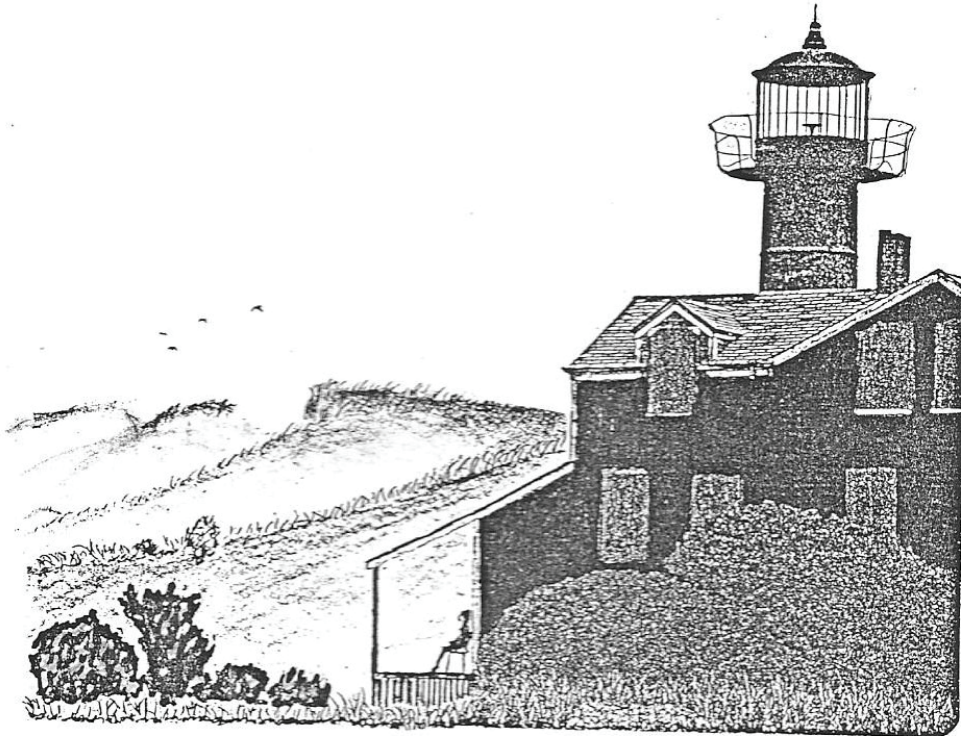
DREAMING MONOMOY'S PAST



WALKING ITS PRESENT

By Lee Roscoe

The interacting nature and culture of a typical coastal area
A subjective and objective account

REVISED EDITION

DREAMING MONOMOY'S PAST

WALKING ITS PRESENT

Dreaming Monomoy's Past
Walking Its Present
by
Lee Stephanie Roscoe
Revised Edition, 2024

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Mass Cultural Council

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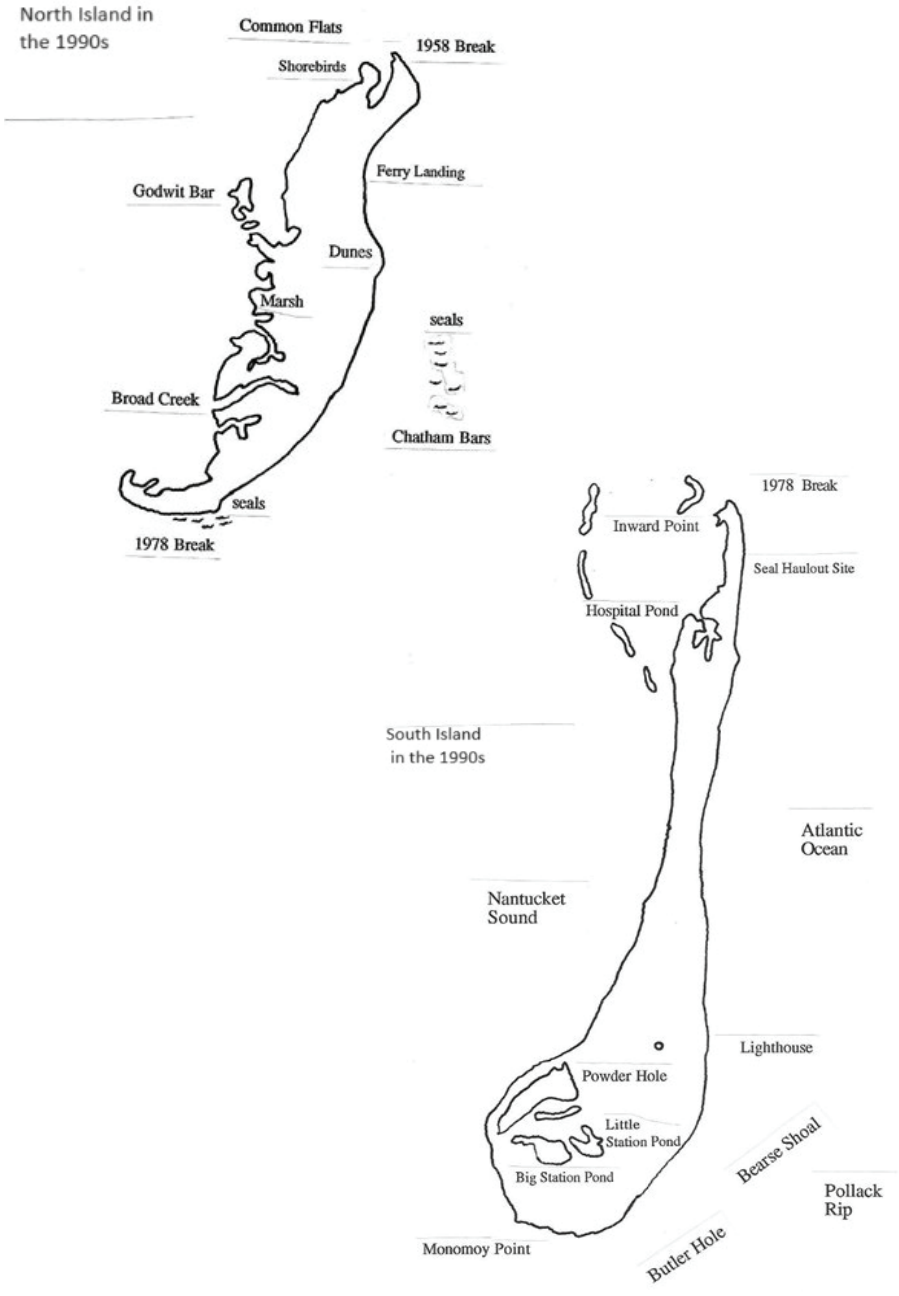
CCCD
Chatham Cultural Council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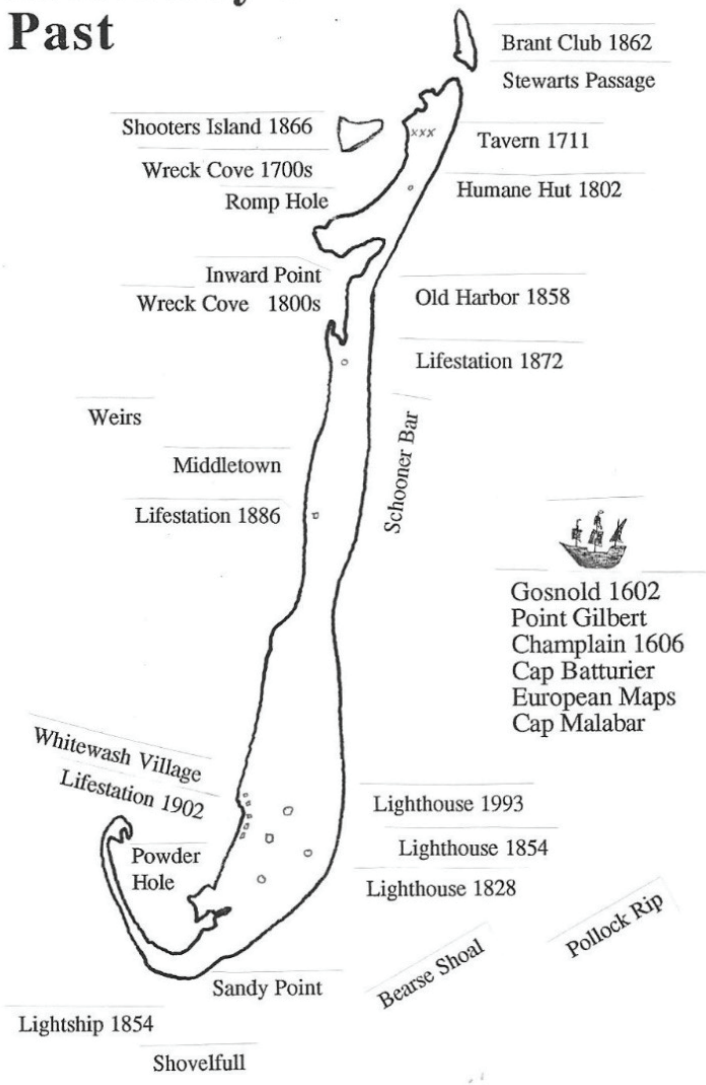
1958 Break
Shorebirds
Ferry Landing
Godwit Bar
Dunes
Marsh
seals
Broad Creek
Chatham Bars
seals
1978 Break
1978 Break
Inward Point
Seal Haulout Site
Hospital Pond
South Island in the 1990s
Atlantic Ocean
Nantucket Sound
Lighthouse
Powder Hole
Little Station Pond
Big Station Pond
Bearse Shoal
Pollack Rip
Monomoy Point
Butler Hole

Monomoy's Past



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Introduction

I may look at the history outlines in books and they are set – like a Sioux winter count. Like an island or a mountain, for a time permanent, until another kind of timespan dissolves their era's works, artifacts, and facts. Then new facts may be found to be truer, others discarded. Sifting these out, certain chunks of action remain which may retain their longevity in truth, and those are rearranged, if not by the sands of time, at least by the tea leaves of interpretation.

There are numerous kinds of histories, and numerous points of view – and numerous methods of presentation. Factual local and national histories have been writ. History has been set down from an economic perspective, a chronological one; personal histories have been written by men involved in the making of their times. These are old histories involved with old disciplines. The dead gutted and dried things they presented to us as "facts" in school, with the stench of ancient biases still clinging to them, hang in midair, disassembled in the ether, without palpable descriptions of place. "What does it look like?" I always asked. Where was it in place and time? I was plagued with a playwright's disposition to need embodiment.

Disembodied national and world history is what used to lose us afloat in linear tides of presidents, generals, and textbooks. But history, like nature and the food chain, is a web, a net. History is local as well as national and global. Any single place of time can connect to the larger circle. Events may proceed out from a single place to affect the world or implode in upon the place to affect its cosmos. It is local history which often affects a person's immediate life within his times; local history which attaches to federal and global history, and more importantly, to tangible, actual earth under it – even as the larger contexts are affected by local and personal events in turn. Thus, as Thomas Jefferson first suggested, you can learn history, as well as natural history, in your own backyard.

History is also linked with nature; there is feedback between the environment and history, each affecting the other. That's what in large part this book is about.

The concept of a cultural evolution embedded within an ecological causality was born in the work of men such as William Cronon and Howard Russell. But well before Cronon's masterpiece, *Changes in the Land*, I had begun to write this book linking nature to the phases of local history. A fascination with the overview of the process of culture within nature we call history began in the 1970s as an obsession with social evolution which led me to read anthropologists and archeologists such as Julian Steward, Kent Flannery, Leslie White and many more. The interplay between historians like Arnold Toynbee with the dynamism of 20th century anthropology created by men like Lewis Binford had sparked a new way of looking at human events beyond the psychological or the economic paradigm, a way which had begun to take environment into account.

Old-fashioned historians seem afraid to proclaim their biases, hiding them in the historical "facts." Newer eco-historians by the nature of their discipline emerge with an honest proclamation of point of view. I roundly proclaim mine: I am moderately like Wachese, the Powhattan who was an "enemy to civilization." If not entirely set against the devices of modernity, such as the computer on which I work (it would be hypocritical to say that I am since I still live with them, although not entirely by choice), I try to look at culture from a tribal or hawk-eye point of view.

I wanted to combine the small history with the larger, to begin to investigate how patterns of cultural processes are intertwined with, and limited by, nature; and how those forces affect intimate personal reality. I was curious about how our times make us. Too, the idea of dramatizing somewhat in non-fiction the historical evolution which James Michener had done in his mass-appeal fictions intrigued me. To put it another way, the idea of history as something written with an honestly proclaimed bias, better yet, as something which connected the interactions of nature and culture to those of the individual perceiving them, the coupling of subjective and objective views – haunted me.

No place seemed better suited to this experiment than Monomoy. Cape Cod is one of the earlier places settled by Europeans invading the New World. We can see from it, as Thoreau obliquely suggested, a whole view of American events. What happens to this small area's fragments may preview what happens to the rest of the nation. Monomoy is a mote in a sea and whirlpool of Cape Cod and of America. Connected to the earth by the realms of weather and mud and sand and grass, by moisture and living creatures – those creations which ultimately rule human events no matter how much we have sought to divorce ourselves from them in our past documents – it, like every other piece of land where history takes place, is a skeleton upon which events organically, by preordained or at

least limited forces, flesh out a time in space.

If there is no history without the land and sea and air, then the niches of nature are like rooms in her house. The way man responds to those rooms, creates history. Individual societies' adjustments to those rooms' uses, whether by each season, all throughout varied habitats, or in a single habitat through all seasons, create the character of a culture, change it from tribal and natural to "civilized" and artificial. History is the habitat of the human soul. What history does to the rooms in which she dwells affects the quality of the whole house. This book is a bit like rooms in a house, or a buffet on tables in the rooms. Serve yourself some rooms and dishes and furniture, others avoid if you choose.

For better or worse this is an experimental book. I use essay as poetry – choosing verse, refrain, the repetition of an image or an idea in a different context, so as to investigate it in another light, so as to let it hit the reader in another way. (Hence the intermittent unconventional spacing, fonts and punctuation.) Ideas, like images can become rite. History, in the subjective, history in the objective, like the naked and clothed human, are merely two styles of covering the matter at hand.

Lastly, this book was researched and written in the 1980s-90s, revised in 2022-2024. Though I have tried, not everything has been updated. I have attempted to make clear which time frames I am in throughout. But then, we know that time plays tricks on us.

Prologue

We rode the sea-back. The west sun squeezed out oil colored, rococo, cosmic eyes onto the sky, ovals as high and wide as hills in a vast prairie, and I expected to see long black hair and buffalo as the waters shone sherbet upon lead; for pieces of nature (nature) echo each other, are metaphors for each other, interlocking telescopes.

I was walking on South Island in a felted mood, soft as sleep, after a journey through something left of Adventure: like walking through a geode, where ferns and bullhead lilies grew in freshwater oases, up green furred dune flanks; sitting on the quiet porch of the lighthouse, just the swallows chattering to each other, the creaking of the wood... nothing but the rhythm of slow distance in front of me.

Now, Black bellied plovers whistled. Two phalaropes nodded in salt water the color of pink powdered pastel foil near an inlet where an old shack stood. The dense bayberries and distant individual pitch pines were turning dark. How many of us get to see something like the down-curved wings of night-herons commandeering dusk, coming in to kill tern or gull chicks, or terns marauding a young oystercatcher? The soft, the vulnerable and the fierce.

How many have a mystery, participate in something "bare to the bone," without the excess of technology? Its paradox gives escape to distance easy access, while endangering the very privacy we seek: The World as Diorama. Where is a lantern-slowed kerosene peace when we have cars, radios, tv, supermarkets, computers to supply the quickness of our needs? While I thought this, there were unexpected deer prints in front of me, unannounced beach plants which I was not in the mood to catalogue.

I tried to recreate the movie of this place, its brief history after the long contiguous swell of that dwelling here of the indigenous inhabitants. The romantic's quest I sought: to define being through the shared senses of two was out of reach, but to assuage the heart's pain by recreating the past and diving into a present of beauty was not. Here on this island was a microcosm of the Cape itself, its nature and culture. Sitting on the lighthouse porch, one could tell its tale.

The southeasternmost point of Cape Cod which extends the farthest out into the Atlantic Ocean, is Monomoy, North and South Islands. This duet of islets, since the 1960s a National Wildlife Reserve, is hallowed by nature lovers. Its endangered barrier beach habitats are amongst the premier staging areas for shorebirds on the east coast. The area is also special in its history, in many ways a microcosm of Cape Cod itself. Indeed, Monomoy reflects the cultural processes of almost any coastal barrier area of the American East.

People who have lived on Monomoy hold private memories of an era of freedom quintessentially Cape, and now mostly gone. Shifting contours of land, ferocious seas, alluring and tormented winds and weather, good harbors which come and go, created an area almost winged in its constant motions and changes.

1

The World of Geology Sets the Stage
On Again, Off Again

Primacy

The Indians of Cape Cod, who have been here for between ten and twelve thousand years (and who perhaps used Monomoy for a few thousand) may have known it as loosely attached to land in a curve from Nauset spit to Morris Island. Monomoy then may have broken from its southern soldering, and slowly expanded into the ocean. Whatever its original position, sticking out like a sore thumb as it did, five or so hundred years ago, it was inevitable that Europeans on the way to the New World would discover it. The end of Monomoy is a bit like Eeyore's tail, attaching and detaching to and from the end of Nauset spit and/or Chatham mainland at Morris Island.

During the Era of Exploration

The place may have been unified with the mainland in the shape of an extending peninsula during Verrazano's 1524 explorations. It was most likely hooked to the mainland in 1602, when Bartholomew Gosnold made his landfall in the New World and named it Point Gilbert. Samuel de Champlain's 1607 map shows "Cap Batturier" secured to land in a spit, possibly stretching from Chatham all the way to Pochet in Orleans. It is still a peninsula in 1611 when Velasco of Spain charted the area.

In 1616 Captain John Smith stated, "toward the south and southwest of this cape is found a long and dangerous shoale of sands and rocks. But so farre as I encircled it, I found thirtie fadome water aboard the shore, and a strong current, which makes mee thinke there is a channel about this Shoale, where is the best and greatest fish to be had, Winter and Summer in all the countrie. But the salvages say there is no channel, but the shoals beginne from the maine at Pawmet to the ile of Nausit, and so extends beyond their knowledge into the sea." English explorer Captain Thomas Dermer, independently of Smith in 1619, noted a passage through the long spit from approximately where Pochet is now.

"Divorce," The Early Colonial Era

By the time colonists were "taming" the Cape, from the 1620s through at least King Philip's War, it was mapped by the Dutch and the English by such famed chart makers as Briggs (1625), William Wood (1634), Mercator-Hondius in 1635 when William Nickerson was settling nearby, and Blaue in 1640, as an island. And thus it was on a map of the Nickerson Purchase of around 1656. The detailed Jansson map of 1651/2 shows it vaguely off the land; and John Speed in 1676 charted two pincers attached to the land, with a strip of land named Malabar severed off as an island.

"Trial Marriage," Post King Philip's War

In 1685, Monomoy and two other tiny isles above the "Rose and Crown Shoals," appear to be discrete specks. The English Pilot, Fourth Book, 1689, shows Monomoy distinctly as an island. Cotton Mather's map of 1696 seemingly depicts it as a point, apparently to remain so until 1702.

"Undecided," Wars with the French

As the English wars with French Canada begun in the late 1600s heated up, and trade with the West Indies intensified – during an era littered with pirates and privateers, Monomoy was more or less attached to the land, though channels broached it. By 1706 when various English Coastal Pilots continued to chart it, it was cut through by tides. By 1711 or so when the Wreck Tavern first began to be patronized, it was again a point, loosely joined to land. According to the historic record written in deeds compiled by William Smith in his History of Chatham, and also depicted in charts by Captain Cyprian Southack and others, by 1717 the area was breached by a long narrow inlet, washed over by the sea until at least 1725, when the Homann map named it "Monamoy I." By 1729, the Lothrop letter (see below p. 63), interpreted by Amos Otis at a later date, reported the sands had glued together with the mainland with a passage through at the north end creating a channel from Pleasant Bay (Potanamaquunt Harbor) to Stage Harbor. In 1731 a broach in the sands would by 1733 open into a "New" harbor in the area, slicing it now decisively from Nauset spit.

Through the early 1740s, the place was severed by a thin channel at the headlands while below from 1733 to 1738, as the town banned animals pastured from the town there, there may have at least a low-tide connection, with sands overlapping to the mainland. The Emmanuel Bowen map of 1744 showed Webb's I. as lying off the mainland. By 1746 an inlet of 1740 had closed. It reattached to land from at least Morris Island (Quitnessett) to Inward Point (Wreck Cove) by 1746.

In 1752 there was a quarter to a half a mile passage through Sandy Point (Monomoy) at Morris Island, east to west, carrying through to Port

Fortune (Stage Harbor) from what is now the "Old" harbor, the "beach being then an island." It reattached quickly; by a 1755 map it was drawn as land linked. In 1770, a storm with a possible tidal wave broke "the Monomoy Great Beach" from land, but by 1772 it had glued back on. (At this point the beach on the eastern side began to waste.)

"Married," Through the Revolution 1776-81

Through an unstable time, the land would remain relatively stalwart. From 1774 through the Revolution and the early Federalist reconstruction of the 1800s when rescue huts were placed on Monomoy, it is an isthmus linked to land above the Morris Island headland (between it and James Head, about where the Chatham lighthouse is now), recorded as so during those years by venerable map making men such as T. Jeffries, William Norman, Osgood Carleton and Samuel Holland.

"United Still," Federalism and That War of 1812

As Humane Society huts are erected in 1802, Monomoy is "beach;" Cape Mallebarre or Sandy Point (its other names then) is a part of Chatham. Lambert's coastal maps show it partnered to land during the War of 1812. In 1823 when the lighthouse was commissioned for Sandy Point, the tenuous strip was apparently a peninsula. Blunts' American Coastal Pilot describes its ten narrow miles as still attached to the mainland in 1827: "...the beach of Cape Malebarre, or the sandy point of Chatham...stretches from Chatham 10 miles into the sea, toward Nantucket...on the east side is Stewart's Bend, where boats can moor. On the northwest side is Wreck Cove. Cape Malebarre may be distinguished from Nauset and Chatham beaches because of greater breadth and a less regular form." A hurricane in that year no doubt overwashed the land, creating the beginning of a new breach, just in time for the erection of a new lighthouse in 1828 (replacing the ne built in 1823) when it continued to be logged as a peninsula.

"Divorced," World Shipping and Local Fishing

Whilst the Cape saw prosperity onshore and Whitewash Village grew up here on Monomoy, the Hale map of 1831 shows an isle. In 1838 one writer claims it was reported as a point by the lighthouse keeper, but this simply referred to the terminus of "Sandy Point" itself. In the 1840s according to Blunts' and other written descriptions, it remained off land, although within some degree of proximity to it.

Monomoy village schoolmaster Giddings Ballou in an 1864 article for Harper's Magazine reported that in 1852 it had been snapped completely from the mainland by a storm. Mapmaker Gilbert drew it as isolated from shore in 1853, to remain so in 1858, when Digges, who was making a brand new, reliable United States Coast Survey, reported it as seven miles long.

Civil War and Post-War Changes

Detached through the Civil War when the village closed down in the south, Monomoy extended at the north (or Morris Island extended to the south) so that by 1866 it was resting opposite Morris Island, from Allen's (Minister's) Point, south to Amos Point. Post war, as a shooter's club grew up on the north part, data are inconclusive on the Benjamin Peirce maps of the United States Coast and Geological Survey series 1085 and 1090 as to its state in 1868 when the harbor was virtually gone. It seems to be barely drifting off the land. (Both Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute researchers and the Cape Cod National Seashore agree that the maps are inconclusive.)

However, in 1871, North Beach, the piece of Nauset spit north of Monomoy which had once fused with her, and which had grown and extended greatly since the Revolution, breached. This breach, even as the one in 1987 predicted by geologist Robert Oldale and reported in detail by Tim Wood in "Breakthrough," affected Monomoy. By 1872 historian Simeon Deyo reports that "government buildings" and a "government landing" had washed into the sea, even as a new lifestation was about to be built on the northwest side. (He further states that the storm cut through and washed out a 30-foot chasm near Chatham light with the remnants of footsteps in a peat bog found near a stump complete with animal hair stuck to it.) A Coast Survey map of Chatham in 1872 shows it a conspicuous island. The Yarmouth Register in 1874 wrote of Monomoy as enlarging as it split farther away from shore. A United States Geological Survey map of 1873/4 indeed shows it as an island, as it "migrated westward" through the era of new tourism in the middle and south of the island, "to join with the elbow of the Cape."

But it did not join. Through increasing industrialization and the continuation of wars in the west it is well off the land, and so it apparently stayed until the 1880s: Maps of 1880, 1886, 1887 drawn by the United States Coastal and Geological Survey show the integument, the ligament of sand, as almost tacked back to land in an isthmus. In this era of increasing use of the steamships and of accelerating inventions and urbanism, some camps, some tourism continue on the point. In 1893 the area was soldered on to land, but by 1894, and into 1896 and on past the Spanish American War in 1898, it was offish again.

"Wishy-Washy," Early Modern: First World War into Depression

In 1900 it was bridged by a long narrow strip attaching it to the south end of Nauset spit. In 1903, a year after a second lifestation was erected near the lighthouse, various government maps and charts by the U.S. Coast

Guard and others such as the U.S. Geological Survey show it as barely on its own. In 1906 it was slipped off Morris Island by a thin channel; two years later E.H. Forbush was "obliged to wade to reach this island (Morris Island) and Monomoy at low tide."

By 1910 through 1917 it drifted north to Morris Island and to the south tip of Nauset Spit, tacking on and splitting off from headlands in both those locuses, seemingly at whim, often reachable from the mainland at low tide. By the end of the First World War (which lasted from 1914 to 1918) and on through the 1920s, Flappers heading to the beach in their scandalous new bloomers would have seen sands filling in the gap from Inward Point to Morris Island, while a northern piece of Monomoy fondled Holway Street up near the Chatham light. In fact, there is a map of it in Forbush's "Birds of Massachusetts" which shows it quite thick with the mainland in 1917.

Rum runners and Depression survivors would have known it as swelling from 1927 through the 1930s as it clung to land. In the 1930s you could drive the new automobiles down. By 1938 it was offish again, having slunk away from Holway Street near James Head, but cozying up to Morris Island so that maps appeared to hold three Monomoy life stations, the third being the Morris Island life station.

"Indecisive," From the Second World War Into the Korean Conflict

Nominally united with Chatham and/or Nauset by the 1940s, Monomoy seemed to be the stem of a "Y", the top pieces of which were once again, Nauset and Morris Island. Maps show it a piece of the Chatham mainland in 1942, a year after World War Two began, when it seems to have split further from Shooter's Island, a piece of land tucked onto it near its north end. (In 1866 Shooter's is shown south and opposite Amos Point, Morris Island, next to Monomoy, and detached. Romp Hole inlet is behind it, as are Inward Point. and Wreck Cove, the latter two to the south. In 1923 the Brant Club wanted to gain title to Shooter's, described as high ground surrounded by marsh, water, holes, creeks, where the Brant shanties were. Eventually, according to notes from Eleanor Henderson of the Chatham Historical Society, "The outer beach disappeared, the inner marsh disappeared, the breakers chewed away at Shooter's Island and the Brant shanties and finally they were all gone." The hurricane of 1933 cut a channel through Monomoy at Shooter's. The shanties would blow down by about 1937 and the islet itself would disappear no more than a decade later.) Though U.S. Geological Surveys show Monomoy as an island through the war years which ended in 1945, and beyond – from 1943-47 until 1953 when the Korean War begun in 1950 ended – it was artificially bridged to the land from Morris Island (and well patrolled). High tide

swamped any webby connections to land in the 1950s. In 1956 our star had begun to break off yet again from Morris Island, and by 1958-1959 the rift was widened by summer storms and winter hurricanes.

"Divorce Finalized," The Nuclear Age, Vietnam and Beyond

By 1963, Morris Island itself had broken completely away from the mainland. It was reconnected by a bridge in 1965.

"Broken Heart"

Through the Vietnam era it would drift further off from land. In 1974, a year after the Vietnam conflicts ceased officially, it began to split into two at Inward Point near Stewart's passage. A winter blizzard of 1978 completed the job: now there are a north and a south unit.

This begins to sound like a stormy love affair, doesn't it? And in fact, the two islands may re-fuse together again.

It may even go further to a resolution of all the fragments into a unit: North Island might reconnect to South. Together both might reunite with Nauset spit at the end of South Beach, as well as with the mainland at Morris Island all the way to Harding's Beach.

As of this revised edition, Google shows North and South Island as separate from each other and from land, with shoals stretching to attach all three, and the tip of Nauset spit extending southward to the two.

From so high above, at Morris Island on a sand cliff, I could finally see the land change for thousands of years, see it procreate. Here I was about 40 feet in the air, looking west over the stilled surf of the sand-jelled slip of the curves of dune. In 1987 Nauset Spit breached, splitting South from North Beach. South Beach's piece east of Monomoy has recurved to the mainland near Chatham Light, where Monomoy itself often soldered on in the 1900s. From here I can see it connecting with the North Island, reaching out a splayed, flat, sandy foot, while wisps stretch for where I am. The three living flesh pieces may form the crescent some surmised was there 3000 years ago, connecting to Morris Island, fusing back to the land. Perhaps the land will fill in, make a "hole", a marsh, an edge – and a new large Monomoy extend from Harding's Beach to the Chatham Light and out and down, with its phallic appendage hanging into the Sound. (And I think, even as ancient positions of land recycle, so too in this age do ancient values.)

"The Potters' Sands Move, Monomoy in Relationship to the Nauset System"

After it was broached in 1635 by a hurricane which washed over a good deal of the area from Plymouth to the Cape, the whole of Nauset spit

which may have comprised early Monomoy (Malabar) had moved from its place of attachment slightly below where Pochet in Orleans is now, down to merge with northern Potanamaquut (Potanamacut, Potanumaqunt, Portanumicut; South Orleans) opposite what would later become Little Pleasant Bay (Monomoyick Harbor). As Monomoy moved south, Nauset Isle near Coast Guard Beach expanded, and Pochet Harbor closed up.

In the mid to late 1600s, two pincers shown on maps on the Cape backside extended. In the late 1600s, Monomoy seemed to merge with one of the extended pincers. Our spit continued to drift south, appearing opposite Potanamacut at East Harwich, south of its former South Orleans position, and extending past Chatham's Sipson's Neck and Monamesset (at what would split off to become Strong Island), down to Scatteree and beyond. (Muddy Cove was probably then tucked in behind someplace.) By 1689 the long spit of Nauset to the north of Monomoy had retracted. As areas were eroded, the north end of Monomoy was split from Potanamaquut by water. This was Pleasant Bay, named also the Great Harbor.

The configuration of water was different then: Pleasant Bay opened up above Monomoy (Webb's Island) and was connected to Stage Harbor behind it. Monomoy was not only the eminent barrier spit of the late 1600s through the mid-1700s, but the great delineator of watery harbors. In 1711, the Quason deed to the bounds of the Monomoit Great Beach says, "All that our Great Beach lying between Monamoy (Chatham) and the main sea extending eastwards and westwards so far as our deceased father, John Quason, his right did extend, with all the meadow or sedge ground adjoining thereto belonging from Sandy point home to Sipson's Bounds together with that one Island called Cotchpinicut Island lying between said Monamoy (Chatham proper) and the Great Beach." This describes Monomoy's position relative to land (whether broached by a channel or not), as slightly lower in its proximity to Potanamacut than before.

By 1729 the place was described as "ye Great Beach called Monemy Great beach from Sandy Point Eastward or Northward to Potanumacut Harbor so called the Meadow and Sedge ground adjoining."

When the passage broke through in 1733 to create New Harbor well below Sipson's nearer to James Head, Nauset spit above Little Pleasant Bay was beginning to extend from its old locale and continued to do so through the Revolution and on, so that by the 1790s the whole area would take more of the double-spitted shape we know today. (The configurations of both spits, Nauset and Monomoy, then were very similar to those of the 1950s.)

By 1770, a part of the old Great Beach would remain above Old Harbor from South Orleans to Scatteree at Pleasant Bay, now fissioned from the old Monomoy (our reproducing sand-bud cell). Before the Revolution

the New Harbor had become the Old, and a passage between it and Stage Harbor had closed up; the last boat to sail it was a pinky schooner. Sometime between the 1780s and 90s, Nauset spit, and/or a piece of old Monomoy seems to have broached, possibly leaving a chunk near Sipson's Bounds which floated into Pleasant Bay to become Strong Island. By 1797, Monomoy purchases were divided into the "Strong Island" and the "Monomoit Great Beach." By the 1795 Carleton map, the Great Beach's old attachment to southern Pleasant Bay had eroded; to see it glued on somewhere near James Head. The northern piece would continue to be mentioned in deeds regarding the old Monamoit Great Beach, along with the part now to the south, from James Head to Inward Point near Morris Island and on to the tip at Sandy Point – until the 1800s.

Nauset spit extended from 1800 through the 1820s, when it almost overlapped with Monomoy, which itself, according to historian Frederick Freeman, was extending over a mile a year in that period, even as it moved south. Chatham Historical Society notes about 1819 court records indicated that the once of contiguous Great Beach had divided and a piece attached to land from James Head north to Strong Harbor, with yet another extending from Inward Point south, making "the new point on Monamoit Great Beach in Chatham lying southward of Wreck Cove and Stewart's Knoll." (Everything is like taffy, with spits pulling, breaking, refilling.) As stated above, Monomoy breached with land in the 1830s and in the 1840s (likely after the Minot Gale of 1841 when Ram's Island which had travelled north, or seemed to as Monomoy drifted south, sank.) Nauset spit and Monomoy may have been contiguous for a brief time, until Nauset spit by 1846, itself had (as before) split in two. When Monomoy cut from land even further after the Yankee Gale of 1851, Nauset's southern barrier beach, South Beach, shrunk while the northern one, North Beach, extended again.

In 1871/2, North Beach broke in half once more. Meanwhile Monomoy drifted from land while the southern spit of the break at Nauset would be shown on maps as recurving into land, seemingly to attach to Monomoy's north end for part of the first two decades of the 1900s, somewhere near James Head, where the Chatham lighthouse is.

In current times after the North and South Beach breach of 1987, South Beach attached to Chatham in 1992 and then attached itself to South Monomoy by 2006! In 2024, South Beach is barely there, and North Beach is an island.

Geological Obsession

Why this obsession with the contours, every lengthening and break and mud flat, every green marsh gash suppurating leaky mud in the heat,

every filling in of this place? Here were clam skies, spitting moisture like clams, obscure skies the same color as their shells. I looked out in memory, as if from a lighthouse, across the pewter-sullen flats ridged with the indentations of recent waves.

The comings and goings of a piece of sand are like a piece of flesh. The land lives with a body set by geological, if not genetic, parameters of its own. Without the flesh there is no sense and life. No geology, no special structure of an environment: no history. No geology, no creatures, no resources. (No wonder the Sioux worshipped the rock as *takuskan skan*, motion and time sacred, revealed in the perfume of the holy grass.)

(Why is the geology of a place so important? Because it created its natural niches – those bodily zones of a total organism. Because those niches created cultural events for man. The nature of a place sets the limits on its actions.)

The intrigue here, since I was a child, has been this place's (Cape Cod in toto, that is) lurking affinity for the sea. It is neither sea nor sky, nor land. Scrubby bayberry fakes a kind of trompe l'oeil sea wave, iron-y and sculpted of metal; beach plum mimics the foam. Wet and dry are inseparable as are sun and shade. Shade hides, bites, within the rim of sun. Storm releases its yolk of sun. Nothing is stable.

I can see channels opening and closing; shallops, fishing boats passing easily on the inside or having to round the tip of the place, exposing themselves to bad waters. I think of that last boat to make it through the channel between the island and the mainland, sometime between 1752 and 1772. (How the world changed in those years. How the rain-dim pewter-green marsh was no longer lit by tallow, but by spermaceti; how the storms came to engulf the place, swallowed up in wetness. How the bear-growling woods would be opened up to the blast of nude dune...)

Transportation and the Available Isle, an Undercurrent

These wonderful shifting discrepancies are a bit like the lands themselves: tidal changes, lantern light, motion, the ground moving from under your feet. The reasons they are of interest are two: one, its motile geology affects the accessibility to it and thus its utilization. Conversely, transportation is also a clue as to its geological status in a given time.

Monomoyicks probably walked or paddled in. Horsemen in cloaks may have reached the Wreck Tavern by gallop as well as by scow in pre-Revolutionary days. Horse and buggy or feet might take you down from the time the Humane Society built huts, while during the days of Whitewash Village and the lighthouse to the time of the newly established Brant Club

with the soon to follow Civil War, only boats might approach, although perhaps horses (along with goats, chickens, sheep, the occasional cow) may likely have been living on the island and could have provided a ride up it.

In the era of the 1860s through 1880, sources written and charted are sketchy. However, Eleanor Henderson, past president of the Chatham Historical Society and occasional resident of Monomoy (she was a Bearse, and her ancestors peopled the lighthouses and villages of this strand), showed me old notes which mention visitors anchoring in a yacht-sloop in 1873 at Powder Hole (Monomoy Harbor), as well as being dropped off by dory from a ferry schooner in 1879 at Inward Point (Middletown Harbor) to walk six or eight miles to the southern terminus.

Jennings, in "A Lighthouse Family," speaks of horses sinking into tidal flats connecting the isle to the mainland in 1909, so that supplies were brought in by dory to the lighthouse. Henderson remembers walking down as a girl well before 1920. J.A. Nickerson's "Days to Remember" recalls going by dory to Flat Fish Hole at Monomoy to hunt ducks in the late 1920s but cites "The Moy" as walkable from its joining to land up at Holway Street, James Head. Henderson photos show a line of new autos in 1928, waiting to go down the sand. (Nickerson, in his book, is not alone in his praises for the cranked Model As which rode down on balloon tires in the '30s. Many Monomoiers speak in awe of their metal and rubber ability to carry humans on sand.)

During World War Two, gas rationing made for few car or boat trips out. Dana Eldridge, whose related family ancestors first peopled Monomoy after the Natives, and whose immediate family was deeded a piece of the "Great Beach" in 1869, says that you could reach the Moy at low tide during not only these War years but those of the Korean War. However, the Coast Guard was often summoned to pull out sinking vehicles: some jokers letting go of the rope at the wrong end when the vehicles were just emerging from tidal muck. Ephemeral bridges tended to wash out, and they were hard deals to negotiate what with water and sand fighting them. Sand bagging helped but created no permanence. Many visitors recollect reaching Monomoy by barge ferry in the late fifties through the 1960s. But the barge, too, had its travails, transporting not just humans but their vehicles; for instance, it sank one time while carrying a loaded camper van. The Eldredges ("e" not "i") ran the ferry; price was about 5 dollars.

A sand-diked causeway bridge built in 1958-60 was blown out shortly afterwards by storms. By 1964, after Morris Island and Monomoy were split completely; no vehicle could gain access. A new sand-diked bridge went in by 1965 which, by 1967, let Mass Audubon take people down by beach buggy, but many preferred getting there by the barge ferry.

In the 1990s, Monomoy's set of islets were reachable only by vessel.

Though motor and sailing boat are the usual means, I have seen a man kayak in, and friends of mine used to row or canoe out at sunset when the winds and tides were right.

Now, in the new millennium, various ferries will take you there or boat you around it to see its sights.

Glacial Bones

As warm as is the lee of the south, as chill and bewitched, the north. I think of North Island as created by a Snowy Owl King out of his spirit mystery breath. The island is dappled in white fog, his down feathers; is frosted by a cold morning, his breath. The spots of plucked down he leaves when he preens are the spume. His eyes are lanterns of golden moons. The diffused lanterns swing across the wings and pinions of tidal rivers.

Yet the scientific is no less mysterious than my mythology. How did this temperamental place evolve?

Cape Cod was formed by departing glaciers after the last Ice Age retreated from about 18,000 during the Wisconsin glacial stage to 6,000 years ago during the Holocene. The seas were held in glaciers almost a mile high in some places north of here, and you could have walked across a good part of Canada's Grand Banks, down through the Gulf of Maine to Massachusetts and Cape Cod Bay on ice – across Nantucket Sound from the George's Banks, through tundra.

Huge lobes of Brillo ice, almost a half mile high, in our area, rub land down, carry debris with it; retreat, leaving a backbone of rock, a moraine; an outwash of rubble, clay, gravel.

Hunters would follow large game such as mammoths through cold-adapted willows and spruces. The whole area probably looked more like parts of northern Minnesota than the barer arctic circle. The blue light of ice metamorphosed in the Holocene epoch of the final stage of the retreating ice to a yellow heat. As the last three major glacial comings and goings of the last 150,000 Wisconsin glaciation years stopped, and the earth warmed, the locked-up sea began to melt, allowing it to rush back, further changing the world's climate. The composition of flora changed, encouraging certain of the bigger animals, such as mastodons, mammoths, saber toothed tigers, Ice Age bison, to die off. As the littler ones we know now take their place in reality, the transition is mirrored in Algonquian stories which may have been told on Monomoy, around driftwood fires, powder blue and orange against an amethyst evening sky, as various culture heroes made the animals "to their rightful sizes" after a flood. But first, many of the plants we know invaded the mainland to feed the animals: oak, hickory, beech, taking over from spruce.

Flesh: Sand Drift to Sand Spit

According to geologist Robert Oldale, "The Monomoy Islands and sand spits rest on a bed of glacial material left approximately 18,000 years ago in the wake of retreating glaciers."

As a dump of submerged glacial spill or till then, what would become the barrier spit/island(s) of Monomoy may have risen its sea serpent backbone up through and out into shallow returning seas after thousands of years. Some six to three thousand years' depositions of longshore currents moving down from Wellfleet and Eastham as well as Chatham lengthened it. In other words, sand was carried south from the underwater Continental Shelf and its slope, from the beaches and sand bars of the east side of the Cape, to add to and lengthen the original marine deposit. (During this formational time, Monomoy may have migrated westward from its prehistoric position.)

A long bar of sand which protects a watery area between it and the mainland to which it is attached is technically a barrier spit. If it breaks into an island, it is a barrier island. Monomoy, whether a point, an island, or as now, two islets, is, as we have pointed out, a cousin to and a piece of, the whole of the Nauset spit system north of it. (When we are talking about Monomoy's processes, we are really talking about a system of pieces of land, channels, sandbars, and seas which includes not only Nauset but the pincers of Chatham comprising the elbow of the Cape: Morris Island with Harding's Beach, as well as stray chunks cut off from these masses.)

There seems to be a kind of "limits to growth" inherent in the combined actions of wind, wave and sand, a geological predestination which the Monomoy lands fill in. Geologists agree that extensions like this seldom grow longer than ten miles long before the forces of wind and water break them to recycle. North Island is only two or three miles long, South is six or seven. Neither are wider than a mile and a half.

Winds and Water

How does this limitation occur? Monomoy(s) are not only extended by sand flow. The wriggling, expanding, contracting, whip-like history of the place is pressured into shape and action by wind, water and tides. Sea level, the amount by which the spit is submerged by water, is crucial; so too is wave pressure: applications of wave and tidal action. Some waves flow south and west from the local Atlantic. Currents come northeast from Nantucket Sound, meet those coming down from the open Atlantic. They create a clockwise motion circling around the isles through Nantucket Sound on the west, pushing in on the west from the east. Some currents flow south from the Labrador Current. Currents hurry north and east up

from the Gulf Stream. These may create a more distant clockwise circular pressure and motion circling around the isles. (Spirals within circles within circles.)

Looking out from the present lighthouse, I realize this spit has been like a slow barge moored to the land further up the coast, released to sail a ways south to the limits of the ocean reaching up from Nantucket. *These Fragile Outposts* writes, "It is unlikely that Cape Cod and Nantucket will ever be united, strain as they may toward each other. When their respective spits reach out too far, they hit a rapid east-west current which flows between them. This overpowers the shore current and swings the material westward. That is why both Monomoy and Great Point are curved sharply, like hooks to the west."

Bernoulli's Principle reveals that air hitting a vertical object such as a house or a tree, picks up speed as it rises to pass over the thing in its way: this can explain both why roofs are torn off and trees uprooted. Jetties, both natural and manmade are a bit like houses laid on their side with the waters acting as winds. The sea is a bully, hitting an object in its way. It goes into and around the object in a spiral curl, gaining momentum as it meets resistance.

On Monomoy, the hydraulic effect of the sea action does three things: the longshore current sand we have mentioned, sheared off the east side by the sea, is redeposited on the southwest. This "refraction" is why the lighthouse seems to have moved from east to west at the foot of the isle. This prograding not only silts in harbors, but, coupled with the action of wind-borne sand on the land, contributes to the march of concentric circles of three or four dune ridges which wrap her east flank and her southwest tip, *each section adding to the place even as coils of clay add to pottery, as the potter shaved away at the opposite side.*

In the immediate waters around South Island, the Atlantic is deeper, while the Sound on the west is shallower. When faster, deeper water meets shallower water, terrific chops at the rips of the point are created. The hydraulic effect of water creating pressure against obstacles, breaks channels into them. Inequality between the slower, shallower inside seas and the faster deeper outer waters, creates a pressure which tends to expand the break by pulling water through it. There is a force created around the whole spit by the outer higher pressure spinning around into the inner lower pressure area; a kind of vacuum sucking out sand even as it will later push on through it. Whatever the absolute science of it, the stresses cut through the spits, and might even turn them around if they were small enough floating units.

Let us not forget the winds. Winds blow sand, sometimes at 14 feet per

second, moving it to "build up onshore around the lee of objects." Winds let square miles of water revenge themselves on land. Northeasters (which could be called "nor'eaters," they often glut themselves so on the sands, both eating them and excreting them), as well as hurricanes and the wind off the Atlantic pushing west onto the land, help as sculptors as well.

Seen from above in time, it might appear like a kind of shifting sea eddy, a contained and enclosed rip, only of sands; a geological afterthought to the Cape, but an inevitable one. Yet nothing so well reveals the organic extensions and contractions of the east side of the Cape as the compression of this vast geological motion by the Monomoy lands. The whole Cape, like the whole east coast of America, gives birth to limbs of sand. Beaches extend south, overlap other ones, joining each other, attach to land, extend further, break, and wander off into the sea, while pieces left behind, recede and grow to fission once again. Sands are swept around, closing back onto land. (Swirl, extend, press, detach, close.) Extending, recurving, attaching to land, overlapping spits slow trapped water, create pressure, break off, move south to their limits; cycle again – a time-dance.

That the barrier sands of the Cape move was proven, as Center for Coastal Studies geologist Graham Giese says, when the Sparrowhawk, wrecked in 1626 on the inner side of Nauset, was discovered 237 years later on the outer side. Thoreau tells of the Cape "rolling over" a log canoe on the East Harbor side of Truro, which then appeared somewhat later on the Atlantic side. Amos Otis, author and genealogist of the 1800s, says that Isle Nauset around the era of exploration carried its loose sands southward and inward over the meadows "which for many years have been seen cropping out on the eastern side of the beach which has passed entirely over them and united with Pochet Islands."

Peace in the shoals of dunes; hurricanes might threaten to rip the moon out of the sky, this piece of land from its sea roots. Air might reveal your soul to your heart, or your heart to your mind. As a shell-winged bird lifted with the day lucent through the wings, as it went like white smoke in perfect blue up over a cloud, yellow scents might flex like bayberry candles in a thin balmy dawn, waxy with Hudsonia florets, lighting the orange dusk. Then a moment later, sleepy seas might rise up in sharp obsidian arrows. Ships might lose their sails and masts, wanderers wet and woeful arrive at the tavern for repair. Men might fish and women might knit, braving the visionary apple-day-clear sky, inside a spot of barely land; defiant, exaltational, exposed like those on a desert, a glacier, a sea itself, never to know a complete security although lighthouses might release their reassuring flares into the starry skies. Stars might litter the black heavens like some kind of migrating

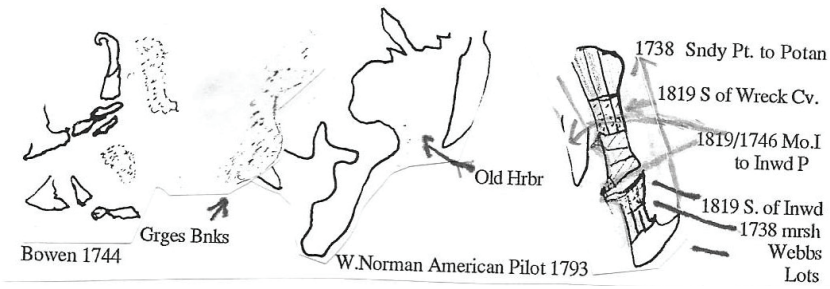
millions of speckled shorebirds exposed in negative, and the vastness itself of universes near at hand, yet elusive, might inspire a human humility, a male modesty, a female nesting urge, even as exposure might blast bravery out of you or swell into you to lift you with daring.

Moveable Monomoys

Not only do these spits stretch, break and change shape within limits, but they continue to "migrate." Nauset moves relatively quickly, while Monomoy creeps, affected by its geological companion, speeding up once in a blue moon, as in the early 1800s. Nauset Beach moved south at one mile every twelve to fifteen years between 1740-1792, that is, about 370 feet a year in 1826 to 1846 when a break slowed Nauset's movement up; recommencing in the 1870s after the 1871 break, to move about 300,000 cubic yards of sand south a year.

Blunts' American Coastal Pilot printed that the beach of Cape Mallebarre (Monomoy) in 1827 "is continually gaining south; above three miles have been added to it in the past fifty years." Henry Mitchell doing Coast Surveys for the area said that it had extended two miles during the century before 1886. He felt that the place was half as long in Champlain's time as it was in his.

The spit of Monomoy crept southerly about 25 feet a year from 1800 to 1840, then speeded up to about 150 feet a year in the mid eighteen hundreds after the 1846 Nauset break. Thoreau in 1857 states that it moved south three miles in 30 years. Local geologist Strahler discovered that between 1856 and 1868, Monomoy moved south at a rate of beyond 150 feet a year. In the 1870s movement slowed down to about 25 feet a year, until in the 1970s, little lengthening was shown. After its 1978 break the Monomoy lands lengthened, moving south at perhaps 175 feet a year, while widening at the southeast end by about 34 feet a year. Each set of barrier spits also moves westward at some five to ten feet a year.



South

It takes about nine miles to get to Powder Hole.

You could smell your way there, as the air gets clearer and clearer, getting closer and closer to the landmark of the lighthouse at the southwest tip; chopping through lean, lurking, lurching waves of livid blues.

Sunday, Oct. 18. There was a traffic jam of frothing ocean and migratory ducks; a spectacle of jazzy fishing boats dipping in the rips for bass at this time of year. There is always a cycle of which fish to catch; fishermen know the lore of the seas, the right lures in time, even as they know the land merely as a marker for the roads of the thick-liquid seas. As we go out on these familiar shallow waters often not much deeper than a man, in his short drawing metal motorboat, my old pal checks for my familiar reactions. Yes, she still goes "wheee" and giggles air-high. Yes, she still stares at the space, low whizzing ducks, the barrier beaches with their scoops of vanilla dunes plopped down like melting ice cream; and once in a while looks at me, behind my sunglasses in my slicker and cap. Yes, I think, he still appears stolid and slightly grim. Tense.

The waters will deepen by South Island if you are 500 feet out from her; deepen and hasten into chops.

As we arrive, cold, wild winter seas which punch and gnaw at shorelines, damp spring rains, finally to be stayed by a hot buttery sun by late May, the kind of sun which peeled paint, would cycle forth once more. Everything seemed to be the color of sand in the mid-day. By the lighthouse, the sound of the ruling seas made peaceful distance of the onshore. Later, only kerosene and stars would light the night, would entertain the eve. The scents of linseed oil under the new white paint on the lighthouse cottage, the scent of dry wood mixes with the emerging scents of the flesh of the land, in the high spring. A mix of honeysuckle and lilac (neither on the isle) with licorice with bayberry and pine somehow would float up here as it used to on the mainland before the perfume of the Cape changed in the 1970s. In the late heat of August, rose and bayberry and grape drifting from far land, might scent the porch.

It's cold as hell today. I look down from the highest knoll on the southeast tip. The day was so clear and dry I could be a bird. I could see the Chatham light northeast; to my southwest I could view almost all the way to Sankaty light on Nantucket. This is one of the triangulations of beams which sailors at sea sought. (The map shows the lands of Monomoy pointing in a straight line from Chatham to Nantucket. In reality the place is tilted on its axis, almost more like an "s" curve from northeast to southwest.)

Facing north, on my right side are low swales of rolling, heath-covered dunes. Now waves of stubbled dunelets dimple out in front. A blockade of sand is on

my other side, beyond it, beach, rough boiling waters. Even though it is a small place, somehow the hillocks and dunes the configurations play a game of blind man's bluff with me, and I have trouble figuring out east from west from north from south; thus, the area has a momentum beyond itself, as if time and space have buckled in upon each other and come out the other side. I always get turned around here, pushed in a circle, like beach grass, like a compass at the north pole, I always get confused as to my direction. I look north to Chatham; like a sailor on a masthead, the wind blows through my hair.

Is the place moving at twenty knots? Or is it just the sky in motion against the plains of the universe?

South Island was characterized for me by circles. The vegetation, from dune plants to the valleys of wetlands shorter and longer grasses, to the swales' copses of thirty-foot high contorted treelets, once named Willow Forest or other appropriate fairy tale names, seem to happen in concentric rings or tiaras.

There was the horseshoe of Powder Hole where we landed, surrounded by curves of low tidal flats; then the circle of the dunes linking their humps from one side of the hoof of the isle to the other. There were crowns of thorns: bunches in circles of green iron brush surrounding the pothole ponds. Wetlands dotted the area, surrounded by slim grasses, like hair on a person's round limbs: There were the drafts of low ellipses, stippled with horned rushes and *Eleocharis*, set off by concurrent rings of purple marsh fleabane late in summer. There were the high cylindrical heads of brown cattails; their fluffy wands circled the wet places. Twirling in the dry sands were the blonde crowns of beach grasses drawing perfect compass rounds in the dry places; puffs of saffron beach heather on the dune shoulders coming yellow elusively when spring peaked; clots of marsh grasses, pyriform mats of ruby blood cranberry globes; balls of lumpy sands swelling under your feet. There was the circle of the lighthouse, and the circle of swirling wings.

There were dips and rises, swells and highs and valleys, like wings, like birds rising on unseen scoops of heat.

There was the rank guano, the odor of acrid fecal matter and blue green algae in some of the eutrophic ponds. (Some were once clean enough for lake bass, pickerel, perch, but now...?)

Walk up from the moored boat, watching the spire of the lighthouse in front of me. *I recollect the warmer weather:* Over sandflats covered oddly with "waste place" wildflowers, past a pond which comes and goes with the tides, even as others will pass out with winter. With this brackish tidal pool in front of me, a surge of green-covered dune in front of me, let my eyes nibble the ground beneath for surprises. I have botanized here,

coming in across the beach from the boat: There has been sea purslane next to cleavers and yellow flowered sow thistle, its leaves clasping the stem. I have crept up to beach pea leaves acting as a bed for mating lady bugs, collected the plasticky childhood treasure of sea rocket cabochons, stalked the brief elusive spring bloom of mustard colored poverty grass (beach heather) sweeping up the back dunes like sunlight over a valley, like a butterfly wing of a gargantuan era.

Now we pass an old cabin at the marsh edge. Windows are broken. The roof is a bunk bed for sunset watchers.

Gulls plummet. Virginally delicate least terns "oink," bounce up and down in air like fishermen's lures in water, like puppets on celestial strings. In back of the cabin is dry dune, warm as the feathers of birds.

We turn left to walk through gullies, small valleys, scooped out as if by someone with a long, curved chisel, creating a huge wood cut.

Turning right: on our left is a vast field of grasses, rushes, and stubby bayberry; on our right a wetland pond, surrounded by thickets shaped by the angst of winds. Walk on up a path lined with bayberry and beach plum, to the lighthouse porch. Straight ahead is the lighthouse which is tucked into a curved wall of dunes. There is black cherry and pine at its back, near the tower. Calm. Winds cease in its lee.

As we eat lunch on the porch, I pick at the sand and find a World War Two quarter concealed under some lazy, sprawling sea-blight.

Across the expanse of prairie-like vista to the west, a harrier rebounds from the fields, resolving the light into itself. A kestrel hovers, gaudily. I eat my sweetest homemade bread, with a quiet friend on the porch; bread made sweeter by sea-hunger and distance.

Today, after lunch, in the copper of late summer, we travel the endless waves of dune ridges towards the ocean: the sugar-white twist of beach leaves us at a shock of cold blue water.

Returning:

Passing up a semblance of a sand road, we cross the heaths of *Hudsonia*, climb onto the highest knoll. Deer start up in the distance like tanned sea foam. Climbing down we trek through low shrubs to Station Pond, past the incoming squads of ducks, around the dying serviceberries and bayberries, out, up a swell of taffy sand, over and up back to Powder Hole and the silver boat.

I look out over the frying pan, war club shape of the south of South Island. The sands flee away in front of me down through the coastal plains of their flatness to the sea edge, down under the waters. There is the lighthouse, unpainted now, once clean white, mated with its pleasing coil of a red metal

tower, jutting into a sky so that it can see out into where the Atlantic has freer reign, yet is still held by land. Gannets still plunge out there, white as wave caps in the frost of November. The hollow of the staircase inside its cylinder makes a music of memory – from the skeletal albedo of bleached sun reflecting off the white house, lo the past rises like those late fall gannets to plunge me down into white waters intersected with purple globes.

Around the lighthouse on its sandy paw would have been clusters of a Cape Cod kind of unadorned Greek Revival cum early Victorian two-story houses, or three-quarter Capes, or fishing shanties, or low gabled, closetty cottages not so different from those of later days. Boats in the mid-eighteen hundreds would have clanked at moorings in Powder Hole in front of me where now, towards the west, low-bristling-shining willows and service bush and sweet gale surround the man-made pothole duck ponds.

Near here too, from a pole with a special outside phone attached to a copper wire, the United States Life Saving Service called up-island to Middle Station during a blinding, thrashing gale, about a wreck which would cause a new station to be built down here near the light in 1902. The Coast Guard would man this place during World War Two. There would even be enemy gunfire onto the shore.

Walking down the knoll past the duck ponds filled with mottled ashy and dead-leaf brown gadwall, copper topped canvasbacks, mad-crested, red-breasted mergansers: males in greenblack jazz hair dos, femmes in red ones, there are more plants: sloppy slim spurrey, a month ago, still lacey pink on the salt marsh, made up of spare commas in assorted directions; spurge splayed, lying down on the dune backs; wormwoods, scented with a mix of turpentine and pine, tall and seedy. In the freshwater marshes, bullrushes with their stiff, straw-like stems look like drumsticks somehow adorned with brushes of molted feathers. Topaz cattails in the brackish, stagnant, threads of wet assemble light against their astonishing orderliness: the bandleaders. Early juncos in grey and white banker's clothes chime. Warblers shimmy, "blit" and bounce, in a blitz of yellows; bayberry gleams and wafts its perfume out. Stippled shorter grasses stubble the flats' mud, covering up the red-brown crust, which on the flats of North Island's tidal areas might be nude Hildenbrandia*. (Where the hall of the North is solely a sea-place of dunes blown out to sculpted flats and sanded down to huge areas of tidal flats, the limbskin of the South is closer akin to the mainland. While North Isle should have on it warriors and pintos riding across the flats, knights and castles the South should have corn planters and small curved hulls.)*

While North seems swollen with potential destruction, chaos, the South is a sweet lee. (In fact, they both could become chaotic with storms.) In the

broad green field, loose with the light of fall, the coming winter weathers could be forgotten:

Rushes, sedges, Andropogon grasses – some broom-like and stiff, shiny with bits of cottony stuff, russet, curled like papyrus wands, seem, at horizon's edge, as if they are brushing the sky into its streaky froth. Bubbly light is sifted through with sea salt, pure as the land used to be before pollution, even as is the visibility itself. The air lives and refracts the yellows and greens and blues. Everlasting and prevalent goldenrod with sickle leaves is turning to fuzz. Lilac-tinted fleabane in the grassy depression, the miniature valleys between the dune fields and the wetlands, in back of the small saltmarsh, is thick with fringe. Some flower heads, passing, look furry, like miniature mice. Sea-slurped dunes, bright sun grazing the grasses, charm-strung lakelets make a linked bracelet. And a sweet scent of salt sea and almost turpentiney grasses.

2

Born of Geology: Nature

The Marsh

"A barrier beach is an elongate coastal feature generally consisting of beaches, dunes and tidal flats," according to geologist Giese. In general barrier beaches help to create and to shelter marshes and estuaries.

The beaches of barrier islands are created in much the same way as the parent body of land. Sands pushed inshore from the continental shelf "upbuild" the land. Inlets created by wind and water working together segment it. Submergence of the land by saltwater changes its shape.

Henry Kittredge wrote, "as soon as a beach has grown long enough to provide calm water inside, marshes begin to make their appearance." Often protected by a circle and spine of dunes, an inlet of sea water is trapped and slowed into a lagoon; sediment is deposited into it, water circulates through sand grains as the water is encircled by flats. Water percolates downward, some salts leach out. Sharp and determinedly rooted salt-tolerant marsh grasses grapple with the muck, invade to anchor the silt which comprises the marsh. Marsh muck has built up as much as 30 feet in 4000 years in some places. Erosion and siltation pare off more solid material to fill in the area: *Over and over again, layer upon layer of silt and grass grows upon a trapped sea inlet which has been slowed up, encircled and engrassed, water seeping downwards.*

Dune, by its pliant sand walls, and marsh by its sponge, protects the land beyond from storm seas and storm winds. These buffer zones and flood controls are so important to the health of the land and sea, as well as to freshwater aquifers, that to harm them is to mandate the death of immense quantities of land and sea life. (Witness, for instance, the die-off in the seas off the Everglades, not to mention the disaster waiting to happen in the Everglades itself because of our manipulations.)

Detritus from dead *spartina* grasses shuffle off into the salty tidal streams. Various algae and bacteria nourish on the detritus. Many tidal organisms, from crustaceans to fish eat the detritus, along with the algae, bacteria;

and they and their excretions are in turn eaten. Marshes' tidal flats warm up nutrients in the sun-glazed shallow waters to energize the spring and fall blooms of algal diatoms, an important microscopic Phyto, or plant, plankton. Together these marsh soups of detritus, bacteria, algae, diatoms feed coastal Phyto and Zooplankton (plant and animal plankton), in their strange, translucent microscopic shapes of alien beings. The plankton, often consisting of juvenile or zoeal and larval forms of crabs, lobsters, hydroids, shrimp, and so on, are crucial to the health of the concentric circle of what might be called the "food whirlpools," rather than the food "chain" or "web." Coastal plankton feeds not only the filter feeders who can eat it, such as mussels, clams, whales, but some of the larger forms of its larval selves, which in turn are eaten by many fish.

Tidal creeks also protect the spawning fish and shellfish which eat the microorganisms and each other. Fish and shellfish reared here in these "nurseries" serve to feed birds and muskrats, as well as larger fish. Menhaden and minnows feed incoming striped bass and bluefish. Marshes and flats shelter worms, insects and their larvae. These too, may nourish fish and are crucial to migrating birds. The rich, watery, mucky land fills waters offshore to feed creatures like eiders, harbor and gray seals, adult as well as juvenile cod, mackerel, bluefish in their spring and fall migrations, with all its edible riches.

The geology of this place created its natural and cultural events. The nature of a place sets the limits on its inhabitants' actions. Marshes evoke a limited response, even as seas and sands do. Only certain plants and animals could survive here; certain wingeds pass. Only certain human activities may transpire; certain histories evolve.

The World of Fresh Water

Whether island or peninsula, rainwater caught by the sands percolated down making the area habitable for certain animals, including humans. This "lens" arrangement, where trapped rainwater sits on top of heavier salt water under the land, is the principle of the whole aquifer of the Cape. Once it was added to by glacial springs, now long gone. The trapped water provides an underground source of potable fluid. It also merges with surface water in Monomoy's occasional fresh and brackish ponds, her above-ground rivulets and creeks.

Niches for Plants and a Few Animals

Earth under my boots is sandy beach, is deep tidal mud, is bouncy and hard marsh flat, is a plains filled with resistant grasses.

The soil and waters of a place limit nature. Certain plants grow. Certain amounts of fresh water let man dwell there to use the plants or animals.

Certain amounts of salty water encourage certain fish or shellfish or plants. It is water in its degrees of salinity which supports the plants of intertidal flats and of salt marsh, and so on. It is the lack of water, either salty or fresh, which determines the plants of primary and second dunes.

North Island is mostly salt marsh, tidal flat and dune. To the South Island add niches of back dune swale, freshwater marsh, brackish pond, and cranberry bog (complete with a bit of sphagnum moss and its decayed self: peat). "Wide, flat, grassland zones often occupy most of a barrier island's width between the...dune and the bayshore," writes the *Sierra Club Guide to the Mid-Atlantic*. Richly productive are salt marsh areas in nitrogen, in exhalations of oxygen, in decay, in sheer biomass. Like all others, an inevitable result of geology, Monomoy's marshes are secured by typical northeastern coastal plants, zoned in those whirlpool circles again, like a bow and arrow practice target: *Spartina alterniflora* grows yard-high by the lowest marsh. *Spartina patens*, famed as salt hay, covers the high marsh with a rim beyond of *Distichlis spicata*, which is a little braided grass of brackish, slightly drier marsh zones. Their companion, *Juncus gerardi*, or black grass, intersperses them at the more brackish circumference. On the lower grassless flats, little seaweed grows, but on the North, swags of bright green sea lettuce (*Ulva*) or brown kelp (*Laminaria*) are apt to be seen washed up. In the pannes, those depressions in the grassy marsh, particularly of the North are sea lavenders (*Limonium c.*) and glassworts (*Salicornia spp.*).

Fescue grass (*Festuca rubra*), panic grass (*Panicum spp.*), redtop with alien and various native bentgrasses (*Agrostis spp.*), quackgrasses (*Agropyron spp.*) to mention some, inhabit damp, less salty dunes and salt marsh areas of both islands, but there are many more of these land-bound blades on the South. Here too, and seldom if ever on the North, are little bluestems (*Andropogon scoparius* renamed *Schizacharium scoparium*) on secondary dunes. The South has characteristic outlines around wet places of broom sedge (not a real sedge) (*Andropogon virginicus*). Both cousin grasses carry their sparkling downy stuff on brown, stiff stems. In the wetlands of the South, but not the North, are the *Carex* and *Cyperus*, *Scirpus*, *Eleocharis* of brackish wetlands. These exotic native sedges, rushes, spike grasses, along with the elfin brooms of horned rush (*Rhynchospora m.*), and the phragmites and cattails, distinguish the South from the North, circle-mark it unmistakably as itself. ("Rushes are round, sedges have edges and grasses are jointed.")

Beach grass (*Ammophila b.*) "it likes the sand," holds the dunes together throughout both systems by its deep tap roots. Although carpets of it flutter blonde-ly on the South, those of the affronted dunes of the North are scruffier. *Solidago sempervirens*, the slovenly seaside goldenrods

of the sands, with seabeach orache's (*Atriplex arenaria*) bony-kneed, rhubarb-red stems, hold North Island dunes together. Dusty miller (*Artemesia s.*) with its cousin wormwood's clustered high dots (*Artemesia c.*) are abundant, and while beach pea (*Lathyrus japonicus*), and clotbur (*Xanthium e.*). The succulent sandwort (*Arenaria peploides*) and rocket (*Cakile edentuala*) can be found on the North but they tend to adorn the more protected dunes of the South where *Hudsonia tomentosa*, the heath-like tussocks of poverty grass, cushion the back dunes.

Seablite (*Suaeda spp.*), standing or drooping like mini-firs, and saltworts (*Salsoli kali*), cactus-like, linger at the line between sand and marsh on the south. Pinweeds (*Lechea spp.*) dot the i's of slender stems, and slender leaved goldenrod, sometimes called golden sea aster (*Chrysopsis f.*) pokes through various sands in both places.

Protected areas on South Island root bayberries (*Myrica p.*) and beach plums (*Prunus maritima*), salt spray roses (*Rosa rugosa*) and even certain swale plants such as cattail (*Typha spp.*) and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) along with wetland germander (*Teucrium c.*), skullcap (*Scutellaria e.*), swamp loosestrife (*Lysimachia t.*). Pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*), some planted foreign brands of pine such as Scotch (*P. sylvestris*) and Red (*P. resinosa*), servicebush (*Amelanchier c.*). Various willows, in particular beaked (*Salix bebbiana*), also inhabit thickets around the ponds near the lighthouse and the lighthouse back dune swale.

Each niche shelters its own kind of animals: There are shrews, muskrats, mice, voles on both islands with about two dozen deer only on South. There are toads, garter and hog nosed snakes, wolf spiders, migrating green darner dragonflies.

Sparse North Island is particularly dense with staging shorebirds, while the wetlands with their pothole ponds on the more vegetated, wider, less tidal scroll of the circular South are a major passage and nesting area for dabbling ducks. (Spring is the season for shorebirds, although late summer will bring hordes of them back in altered plumage; fall is the best time for ducks.) Both islets hold isolated habitat for passing land birds and raptors. North Island has the one lone red cedar tree, (or did when this book was first writ in the 1990s, apparently no longer there), whilst South hoards short thickets and some low trees. The North seems to attract more terns. It wasn't always thus. Terns once haunted the South, ducks the north. At Inward Point, before the break, near Hospital Pond there was freshwater marsh, wet thicket and a wood copse which may have grown small aspens with Solomon's seal at their feet. Except for the incredible abundance of passing shorebirds, the islands, like all islands, have fewer permanent species of bird and animal and reptile and insect than the mainland. And,

like islands elsewhere, isolation can produce locale-individuated species: such as the Monomoy white-footed deer mouse, now likely extirpated.

But to list these plants and animals is nothing compared to the delight *of coming onto the east side of the farthest point south in a golden spring morning. You have followed the guidance of the lighthouse, lost it, and now... found it again as you climb pasta dune. You feel as if you are so far back in a kind of clarified light of time that you could be First Man or First Woman in their First Rendezvous. Light deflects off the dunes, which swell up as living flesh about to flow and run...when suddenly appear antlers, or is it the gilded bayberry? No, it's antlers. A dun-colored buck and his doe stare at you as you sit on the deck of the lighthouse, checking you out. They pause, stotting (lifting their white fluffy tails in alarm), then run off, blending into the sand, as you are dazed by the apparition and by the freshness of the unpolluted air.*

I can never make up my mind which season is the most dazzling. How about the joy of seeing the vistas of the north on a sleek cold November day? The dunes to my right as I look down the isle are like huge tidal flames in white, there is a mesa-like feeling to them. I could be on the Montana plains. Or, as I look to sparse flats, spotted with high tides the color of mussel shells, bearded with spartinas, clotted with wrack...finding a mortal finality yet an eternality in paradox on the place, I could well be on tundra in the far north. Perhaps the lurking secretive dunes conceal a snowy owl. The black and white sea ducks stream in, decorating the skies in a quavery streak of living smoke.

Then there is fall when designer ducks in migration in their various clan insignias of iridescent green or copper on their shoulders land feet first, quacking with familial joy, powwow together; or the dead of winter when heavy winter raptors may fly over a quieted vista. Perhaps a white gyrfalcon might flap heavily over the lighthouse, flying along at the horizon's edge dragging the arctic behind it. This hunting hawk of emperors rarely will seek down out of the still peoplelessness of the arctic circle, here watching for an isolated bird to plunder.

How about the height of summer, when the terns whizz up, hover, play their comb-like music and peskily attack anything beneath their red bills? Or then again, early spring when the marsh grasses turn a sharp yellow-green, slicing a sweet cucumber freshness out of the supple air; or spring when the Hudsonia blooms in mustard colored cushions for Miss Muffet, settees for pukwudjinnees (Algonquian little people), and the feathered crooks of the Black-crowned Night herons hang on trees next to the foggy Snowy egrets picking at the mirrored waters. Cold and salty, half moist and half dry, you become a part of the place. You want to know more about the times in which this impudent place thrived.

Slipping off the world's edge, waiting to hear the whimbrels when sea lavender blooms like the frail ghost of amethyst; dusk wooden flutes, down-curved bills, mournfully fluting in autumn: Autumn is here. Winter will seal itself over the dunes and flats creamy syrup, in a kind of golden magma of metallic light, a melted and solidified ore. Clams will go deep; reachable when tide flats unfreeze; those days when shelves of ice are not upon the Sounds. Bushes and thickets become silver and white, and ice over the dunes shifts like a frozen ocean, crushing the sands. Curried and flattened, the damp, golden pelt of the grasses become hollow hairs within a sheath of ice.

With familiarity came the distinction of images. Times and their characteristics, the distinct areas of environments, became discrete particles, no more jumping together at me out of season, out of place.

A Closer "Littoral" Look at the North

I become wind-high on the small motorboat's trip across the sea. There is nothing like the feeling out there as you speed off past that living, moving geology, past a rush of scooped lion-colored soft dunes, like the blood-warm, brood breasts of birds: something swift as the low-flying oldsquaws, something alive, open, free as an old schooner.

Out on these waters, where regattas of sailboats once raced, fishermen divide the waves with their apparatus, lines out at angles; Mozartian oldsquaws shoot fast and low past you, on their way to a ball, sporting their two long tail feathers and masquerade masks. Mergansers' white squares show like semaphores on their wings; their crests streamline in flight; bug-eyed seals pop out at you like jack in the boxes; maybe the pelagic birds of the further privacy of seas will treat you to a glance of a moody-colored jaeger or a shearwater, looking as if someone framed his balsa-like wings with plywood. A current of mackerel creates metallic star points in a sheer film of water; bluefish flop out of the spume like tin rainbows...and terns come tumblin' after. Eiders, scoters in degrees of black and white fly down past Provincetown and beyond, to here. Then. Now, these winter residents of ducks are leaving. It is early spring.

The three quarters of a mile or so to North Island could seem miles and miles away. Motoring to it (into a different world, through the Narnia door of the clouds) over water so shallow you could stand up in it, you take the circuitous "Chatham Road" passing metal markers. Buoys pretend to be drunken people, beckoning. Each year the red buoys, which from a distance sometimes look like men swaying from side to side in hats with long legs, clank in different places; the waters and shoals change after the hard scourings of winter, so that they need to be re-navigated, charts checked.

Least tern commas scrunch up, hover in air, point their arrow beaks

and dive into water alive with silver fish in aerated white rips. Common terns fly up high, taunt the waters and plunge in to carry off a wriggling plundered bracelet of mercurial sand launce. Late in the rips of last fall, I recall the juveniles trying to learn to pick out fish; I applauded their efforts, maternally, or as a wishful cohort.

Near Thanksgiving, and around St. Pat's day, we have watched the seals, seen them squirm down to the seam between water and sand where they practice heaving onto each other's backs. They have amused themselves with us, playing hide and seek with the boat, almost luring us to swim with them. We pass those smoky wisps of sand where some seals still haul out, bouncing down into the water when disturbed, and where now what seem to be many hopeful acolytes of cormorants air their priestly, prehistoric wings. A few shorebirds bow and curtsey, dodder and totter away.

In the 1990s the red cedar marks the entry to the "Nantucket Highway," (the tree and footpath across North Island. Long gone by the time of this revision.) Tern signs are up, little neat square brown and white dockets on picket posts, with string attached, to block out human feet. On the high dune knolls, the droppings of gulls, as those of roseate terns and others do, help to fertilize the vegetation such as the seaside goldenrod, which in turn, helps to conceal the gulls' beige and white speckled, chicken-sized eggs.

I inhale the dry guano scent of gulls, listen to their limitless whines. Sound of that, of the sea, sight of their bared skeletons returning to sand, soon will become part of the wondrous incessancy of summer and its heat. Now they are worried, woofing above us, as we pass through bone white dunes along the flats, over to Godwit Bar, across the flexing tidal streams in our knee-high rubber boots.

I can tell I am on North Island by counterpoint: by the purring whistle of the common terns playing the comb; dashed and dotted by the timid "wee willet wee willet" over and over again of the willets, or the whistles of oystercatchers flushed from their nests. "Whee oo ee," like the notes of a pewee blown through a reed recorder, up down highhh, the black bellied plovers sang against the percussion of the triple notes of yellowlegs, spat out as if you pressed your tongue up to the roof of your mouth to try to whistle and couldn't: "teoo teo teoo."

The scent also, not only the fishy, decaying seaweed scents of low tides, but the scent of high tide, that watery cleansing aroma of a turnip spice of algae, of fresh and salt waters meeting expanding, exchanging some element of each other, also defined the place for me.

If the south was golden and green with combs of deer-hiding bushes, stray hairs of grasses, fluffs of tufted longer grasses, humps of sand, the north was blue-haunted tundra. North Isle was a corridor down and

through which were dunes to one side, the rank ocean there, and the long sheen of the feathers of the flats on the other. Triangular somehow is this blot here: a scarf of sea-surrounded sand, an isosceles pattern defined by a dune ridge hypotenuse and an angle of the pie of marsh and flats. Here is a place ending up in an arctic scene at its southeast end of crashed out smaller dunes, a sparsely vegetated taiga of sand sinews, unbraiding, roping, lassoing, knotting together the hunched grasses, the smooth, round pebbles and bubbles of shorebirds.

We cross over resistant beach grass to the more recumbent, smoother, hair-like, wiry, marsh grasses, and the spare ribs of sea lavender which will bloom in powdery-lilac elf treelets when summer changes to the dusty amethyst and garnet dusk of fall. We walk over crunchy pannes where fingers of edible green glasswort sample the air, to the flats where crusts of algae curl like red-brown interplanetary vegetation. Purple and pink dustings of a photosynthetic sulfur bacteria streak the tidal creek's edge like a ribbon of color in a sand painting. Do these algae and bacteria exist on other planets such as Eridani?

I seek to be warmed by the sun, but a damp chill born out of the sea, carried by marsh, peeled off the exposed, pale dunes, enters me. It is very much like the West here. There are the plains of grasses; there the Badlands' chalky ramparts. There is so much marsh grass, flopped over like the fur of a nice palomino. I bend down to pet it. Dunes are coyote colored. The tapioca sand sucks in your boots. And above all there is that country of the sky. Space which exalts, exhilarates, gives birth to visions. Space which controls by weather and wind. I could live here, away from the mainland, hunt here, live off shellfish and near-shore fish, nibbling samphire; look for those Navaho blanket patterned short eared owls to make friends with. At night when it grows very cold, stars come out like globules of ice, so thickly clustered I might reach for a fist-full to throw into your water for music cubes.

It is a long walk across the tough low marsh blades, through the catchments of creeks, onto the softer, horsey manes of the high marsh salt hay, and finally onto the other side's dead horseshoe crab littered flats. The water of the west side edges up calmly like a translucent wrap, to clasp the mud. The ocean catechizes the wind.

When lilacs bloom on land and the foxlike scent of fur is musky in the rising warmth of heat being born for summer, here there is a musk of green seas. Here in waves, the shorebirds will come in, telling us which strata of spring it is. Shorebird clouds are truly amoeba-like. Those round organisms of sanderlings; those moebius eights of black bellies, those

cumuluses of assorted sandpipers, expand and contract, then land; rise up in fear at a raptor. In the exposed flats, where the mottled, dappled birds wreathe each other, sleeping; or wobble up and down picking, probing in their tentative or assertive styles, are many varieties of worms, some of which dance into the highest spring seas to swirl and mate, some of which build homes of sand around their bodies, like a god creating stars around him, some of which light up in strange colors of red and blue, some of which sport feathers around their heads.

In the flats are spiteful, spitting clams, migrating slowly as youngsters, growing and enlarging their shells, a bit like the rings of tree cambium, filter feeding, even as whales and mussels do, on detritus and plankton, taking in through one siphon, excreting their "blows" through another now, like upwards rain aimed right towards our feet slopping in the cloud-colored flats which are their roofs. In the flats are various larvae. On top of the flats' gauzy wetness are those various snow-crystal-like diatoms. In the drier sands are pale insects, amphipods, beach hoppers; some hop up unexpectedly, land, spiral around, fall on their beige shrimplike backs. Hordes of crimson-brown horseshoe crabs link murkily onto each other's backs in the shallow waters at the bay edge, depositing their galaxies of eggs which the migrating shorebirds delight to eat. Some have stranded, upturned, and are being pecked at by opportunistic gulls. A bald eagle is here, ignominiously cleaning his foot from gull-flesh.

Crossing back out to the boat as the sun is waning, in back of the flats a few piping plovers are trying to nest in the wrack line. The frail pert plump birds in their tiaras and gorgets bow meekly up and down, trot back and forth from the wrack line to the beach edge, daintily dipping their pencil nib bills into the sands. Down from them the colony of terns attempting to reproduce, shorebirds swirl like nebulae, draw milky lines across an impendingly inky sky. Beyond these, on higher ground, those clunky oystercatchers, like some kind of Ernie Kovacs glockenspiel, robotic toy, black and white with big, worried eyes and a long red bill, with a willet-like alarm call, run away from intruders, fly up, circle, run away, as if their shoulders would get ahead of their feet; dissolve into the fog lymph between wet high tidal flats and white, moist sky. The oystercatchers, like the pipers, find enough privacy and sustenance here to make it one of their Cape Cod nesting areas, again.

Grasses become amethyst spears. Grasses turn into crystals, from beige to green and red and dusky violet. Yellow legs in small flocks, triple whistle, to do what towards dusk? To snooze in the long grasses and awake under a full moon to eat again?

Back across the marsh, the least sandpipers in small bands, mocha

brown feathers, yellow-green, algae colored legs, littler than my hand, fly away. Sharptailed sparrows, with their orangey cheeks, burst out from cover and fly a bit, disappear.

The dusk gets caught in the creeks and grasses. The birds continue to do their thing. Coming out at night after a sleep, when the tide subsides, to feed again under the skeleton moon. When no man can disturb them. Only owls.

Here was the sacred land, perhaps an early camp of the gentle people of the Turtle with its supple familiar body of the dunes (aeries to snow owls) luminous as a moon, whiter than spirit white; lit by the wicks of Saltgrass turning Norseman's hair color in the cold. The stiff grasses conducted the seasonal colors down their wicks, shifting like tourmaline polarizing hues from green to gloomy autumnal reds, casting out their eerie illuminations. It is a very thin land, a wafer; it and the vibrant sea are o'ertaken by the hugeness of sky delivering its harvested sheaves of blue and violet and oranges inside the realm of dream.

Interconnected – (An Undercurrent)

Each habitat, tidal flat, dune, marsh, both low and high; creek, ocean, is dependent on one another. This is not just a frequently mouthed, fashionable phrase, "interconnected," but a fleshly, breathy, blooded reality. If you cut out the marshes, there would be no protected tepid tidal spawning nursery, no nourishment fairs replete with miniscule zoos of food for fish; far fewer fish would twist in the oceans. The absence of flats would mean no shellfish, worms, certain larvae, no shorebirds. Less marsh would mean the dunes would have no buffer protecting them from blow-out.

Marsh has zones, from salty to fresher: salinity changes with the seasons, like the temperatures of top and bottom layers in virtually all bodies of water. These temperatures in turn inspire the constellations of plankton, from diatom to the minutia of many species of crustacean and on - to blossom. Each zone in the land, soggy or dry, is like a piece of the body: a toe, a foot, a calf muscle. Spartina survives in salty water with *Distichlis*, *Juncus* in more brackish areas; *Scirpus*, *Carex*, *Cyperus* in yet less saline areas, and panic grass, in yet dryer. What each of these humble grasses, not to mention the other plants do for each other is unknown. Snipping out the flesh of this (or any) salt marsh would mean less area of exchange for salt and fresh liquids beneath and through the marsh's sands and greens; less cleansed waters for the freshwater marshes and the lens beneath the sands. A less, or more, diluted brackish marsh would perhaps mean fewer waters with their solutions of oxygen left to exchange ions with contrasting anoxic areas of freshwater marsh.

Interchanges which maintain the balanced mineral and nutrient contents of earth's solids and liquids may exchange piece to piece, a kind of esoterica of which we know little. Waters and soils release nutrients back and forth to each other which maintain organisms within subtle fluxes. For instance, oysters like slow moving, warmish estuaries; certain salt-loving fish cannot survive upstream, and those which have adapted to fresher waters may not be able to live further towards an estuary mouth. On land, the water and mineral content of soils galvanize the status of flora which grows into the saturated, or not, earth. Change anything, and interchanges of molecules which maintain minerals and organisms within the waters, and flora which grows into the saturated soils and animals which rely on the flora and its insects would be disturbed, like adding too much hemoglobin or too little to the blood; like cutting out the interaction of liver and kidneys.

Marshes exhale tremendous amounts of biogases; like forests, they too are involved in the release of oxygen from the carbon cycle, the fixing of nitrogen. What the edge of the earth needs to keep its seas happy, its first curl of land healthy, and the relationship between land, water and air, serendipitous, still bears secrets unto itself.

3

Nature Begins to Make History
First Man, Original Humans

Chatham and Monomoy (as well as some of Brewster and Harwich) were inhabited by the Monomoiycks (spelled numerous ways). The tribe's name was, according to the Cape Cod Compass and generally accepted, from *munumuhkemoo* or, "there is a mighty rush of water," presumably of ocean. According to Keith Wilbur, archeologist, "*monomonack*" means "a lookout." I think this is the etymology of the tribal name, for what corner of the Americas was as well placed to view into the ocean for fish and

foreigners. Explorer Thomas Dermer in 1619 named the peninsula at the southern tip of the Cape "Manamock," very close to the aforesaid term. Many colonists spoke a brand of English north country dialect which compressed syllables and flattened vowels. For example the word for a passage way, "drain," would become "drean," thus "-monack" might easily have been converted to "monk" to "moyick."

In his history of Chatham, Smith writes: "This (Manamoit) is the spelling commonly found in the Mass. Colony Records. The name, however, whether spelled with an "a" or an "o," was always pronounced the same way. it is believed. The "a" in Manamoit had the sound of "a'' in the word "want," and Manamoit was pronounced as if it were spelled Mawnawmolt, or Monomoit, just as Quason was pronounced Quawson or Quossen."

The Monomoyicks themselves, however named, were members of the confederacy of Pokanokets ("people of the cleared places," "people of the bays") in old texts, really the Wampanoag ("people of the east," "people of the rising sun."). Their massassoit (the leader or sachem) Ousamequin, Yellow Feather, who met the Separatists in the 1620s at Plymouth, had a home range extending from halfway through Rhode Island through some of the southeastern Massachusetts to Plymouth and beyond. He was allied with the outer Cape's Pamets of Truro, the "Nausits" of Eastham and Orleans and our Monamoi(y)cks beyond Pochet ("the dividing line") as well was with Setuckets, Mattakeesits, Cummaquids, Manomets and Sakonnets of the Mid and Upper Cape. Mattaquason was the Monomoyick elder sachem at the time of "white contact." (One wonders what his name meant: matta was a morpheme which in Algonquian tongues usually meant "bad" but here may have meant that almost in the modern sense of fierce, prepossessing, effective – a proven warrior. Another possibility for the name's meaning is Mattâqussand, cloud spirit.)

Corn and Whales: A Summer Camp (Verse and Re-Verse)

Monomoyicks would have used Monomoy for summer camps, for hunting deer, for shell fishing. They surely would have hidden in grass blinds to wait for migrating geese, shorebirds, ducks. They likely paddled the area in mishoons (dugout canoes) to harpoon small pilot whales or even right whales. They may have collected the pilot whales, mis-named by the Europeans as blackfish or "grampus" (the first denoting tautog, the second a kind of dolphin) when they washed onshore in fall, drying their blubber and meat to eat, using the oil from their head "melons" for cooking. Setting up small wetus (lodges) of cedar saplings and woven rush and cattail mats, no doubt they put up small, basket-like eel traps, speared fishes and lobsters, sought clams with clamshell hoes. Maybe they set up

offshore fish weirs, or line-fished with soapstone plummets left from an older era of theirs. Perhaps they came here to pray to and celebrate the mere beauty of the place.

I can see figures, planting corn, swimming; roasting clambakes of seaweed, lobsters, plentiful shellfish in the sands of the spit; singing, dancing. I can see the place of golden light for first man and woman. I can imagine moving up and down the proficient knobby land filled with savin (red cedar), (as Webb's Island was said to be) – hickories (then named by Europeans, walnuts), oaks, but little pine, (unlike other pieces of the Cape). Moving as we needed to.

Moving from the slopes of forested lakes down to concealing owl-haunted, wolf-travelled white cedar swamps, out to grape and plum filled sandy areas...from winter to summer, enclosure to revelation, out of forest to sea and sky, down to the plains of summer: staying on Monomoy, the reward for waiting out winter. Staying near the coast in summer, clams, mussels, oysters could be harvested at the flats within a mile or two from the marsh edge near the forest where the first corn was planted, while second and third crops could be planted a mile or two from the area of edge in cleared forest. Weiring, spearing, hooking, netting, here fish could be taken, from herrings arriving in April, to offshore schools of mackerel in spring and summer. We stay on the coast through the celebration of the harvest of corn, squash, beans, sunflower seeds, through the fall time when blackfish beached and fish moved offshore, taking advantage of the increased flows of geese and ducks in spring and fall, by tidal flats and inland ponds.

I would meet and gather blueberries, huckleberries, beach plums with women from other family groups. We women return home while our men travel upward, back inland along freshwaters for game such as the cold weather deer, the racoon and rabbit; chasing deer to within the woods where they begin to gather into mixed sex tribes for the chilly times. Family groups might be more dispersed than in summer gardens, if winter resources were scarce, to better have a chance to find winter meat. If it were really cold in winter, we could have moved our family inland, down valley a bit, nearer to the yarding deer. Or we might live closely together in palisaded villages with other families, if the winter were truly terrible and snow and low temperatures or human enemies threatened; sending out groups of men to hunt.

As winter progresses, some travel in small clan groups back down to the bay mouths for white perch, even for cod, hooking out eels from the riverbanks, pulling up salmon, shooting brant geese. Then coming out of the sheltered woods of hilly valleys, we followed the waters from upland watershed, from lake to stream to river mouth to estuary, outland for arriving fish at the mouths of immaculate seas in spring again, for shorebirds, for then abundant blue crabs – along the mummichog-tinted streams, the salty,

warming creeks within the marsh.

I try to imagine the logic of a life, the knowledge lost, of a life locked into the seasons, when winter comes after celebrations over the gathering of the last salmon, the renewal of deer; the way they and we spread in from the cold, hard, hate of winter breath at the deserts of beaches, inland to shelter; and out, flowering from earth edge to blossoming seas, like the spring beach plums and the yellow heather.

How would it be? Within the dim wounding snow, seeking sheltered woods of the valleys with groups of relatives and friends, denning up warm in our furs, like snuggling muskrats; eating dried corn and beans and pumpkin, awaiting the salty warming amniotic fluid of the creeks?

Thawing and melting, spreading in warmth, humans and creatures, dispersing, bearing, gathering in a tribal summer, wandering to favorite places; retracting to a stickleback sheen in cold; animals to their burrows, men to their fires under the orange moon, in a land uncut by roads, stiffened by evergreen scents, where men followed foot and deer paths, a land protected by forest in the interior (where below you, if you flew, were the clouds of rolling green. The humps of individual trees shielded an unbroken cover, save for clearings made for settlements, save for deer paths) down to the pure tidal areas at an uninterrupted, uncorrupted coast.

Planting corn, hunting, moving your house, as choice or need demanded; sowing in ancestral fields, following the spirits and the animals- respected, for meat and for clothes; beating down the paths for fur animals...coming together as a tribe of Monomoyicks, splitting into bands of clan groups, joining for tales and comfort of company in cold; fissioning off for provisioning, or for the fun of each other's company.

Using our adaptable and capable hands and bodies within the oceans and fields; intermingled with the fluid spirit of all which came and went, owls, bears, deer, corn, moons, each other's time and past, well provided for, at home, at liberty. I am obsessed with the possibility, the view of the island, the loss.

Undercurrent

Champlain's picture of the area of Chatham mainland shows round roofed, Quonset shaped huts, long houses, smoke coming out of them, with corn set on fields. I lived at a house on a lane which was under a hill which looked out to Monomoy. In the shrubby, briar edged yard, very likely had been the same exact corn gardens. What incredible configuration of history had brought me from a fiction I was writing, into the core and kernel of the visions which inspired it, is still a mystery. I could imagine being dressed in furs and deerskin, coming out from the interior woods seeing

the configuration of changes which Point Gilbert had begun to bring. How often I sought to see the life I might have led here with relatives, sane and generous natural people immersed in the seasons; out in the backyard, he wore his buckskin breeches, his hair was long. Vividly, I transposed people I knew back in time to make a healthy, handsome, intelligent, clan. Each time I sat by the hearth fire, the place turned into a round wetu with a long-haired man inside. Right here, I could climb a hill behind the brush and briar, tree-sheltered house to see out to the place of the "lookout."

Digs

There is a tremendous amount of dispute regarding actual settlement patterns at European Contact. The historic record is vague and contradictory; the archeological one, scanty.

Catherine Marten in her superlative monograph for Plimoth Plantation (now Plimoth Patuxet Museums) draws it thus (extrapolated from historic texts): Extended families of 30 or so would live in summer villages at the marsh edges to plant corn in gardens spaced equably from each other, each with its own lodge. Small groups would disperse after the harvest in October and November to follow the game into upland and inland areas. Regrouping back in the valleys again, they lived close together in dense cold-weather villages, longhouses tucked into woods and lakes, occasionally stockaded against enemies, from which small hunting parties would go for game to be hunted through the cold weather. Once again, they dispersed in small family groups in spring, coalescing into clan groups to head down to river mouths for the arriving fish, and on down to the coastal edges as migrating fowl and shorebirds arrived.

Or there may have been those relatively permanent all-year round villages. What is thought by artifact and site interpolation done by archeologists such as Fred Dunford and G. Stillson is that the loose band pattern of Indians for thousands of years had become increasingly more sedentary, less reliant on lake and marine resources by the time of Contact For instance; from digs it has been found that seasonal rounds were made to headlands overlooking a lake near what is now Run Hill Road near Stoney Brook, Brewster, and to Coast Guard Beach's ancient boggy saltmarsh in Eastham by people returning to these traditional sites for perhaps 100s or even thousands of years. At "core" areas rich with shellfish or fish or tubers, the environment may have been degraded by human population increase so resources became less plentiful, less easy to collect, forcing men into sedentism to accommodate more horticulture. Indeed, the intensified use of resources in certain habitats may have itself contributed to sedentism, population growth, habitat degradation, and the need for horticulture.

By A.D. 450, relatively permanent, multi-seasonal habitations may have been in use in these and other areas to accommodate the intensification of gathering of less plentiful resources, as well as the new agrarianism. If increased permanent villages out of which seasonal rounds were made comprised the picture, how permanent, how dense?

Writs

It is difficult to reconstruct life accurately from historic texts. Bradford and Winslow had more reliable accounts of Indian life than Champlain whose accounts are confusing and who may have missed more than he saw, because he was not really looking. But even they never really saw Chatham life, for when they came to trade, as I have mentioned, at least one report of the time says that the natives hid their houses and belongings. This would support a more portable mode of life than a permanent coastal village.

Reports of Eastham Indians at Great Pond in winter and of other tribes near Middleborough in warm weather made by William Bradford would support a scattered populace during a fall hunting season, with summer-thick villages. Champlain, who was there the winter and summer (when he did his Plymouth and Chatham drawings, and his map of the area) before that October when the skirmish took place, describes winter storage pits for cached corn, even as Bradford does. He does not mention any seasonal changes of habitation, save that of rebuilding in place, simply saying that "their dwellings are separate from one another, according to the land which each one occupies." (The furnishings he adds, of the round, large, "thatched" huts often covered with wetlands' grass mattings are a "bed or two, raised a foot from the ground, made of a number of little pieces of wood pressed against each other on which they arrange...a... mat...two or three fingers in depth…") Not only the long house was shown, but in his drawings of Plymouth were beehive shaped round huts, single family dwellings and or planting *wetus* or wigwams. Both structures may have been used for a nuclear or extended family, as need and the season demanded. The sweat house, menstrual hut, sacred house, dance or council house or arbor, and the camping hut would have been some of the other structures used and depicted.

In places like Chatham, there may have been no need to move inward for the winter when you could just travel by foot away from the main village, set up in woodlands by the planting fields; make a temporary camp at wetlands to gather rushes; move to camp at clam flats or in forests for venison; and return. With less fretful winters than across the Bay, and with fewer enemies, most likely in Chatham, there was a kind of pie wedge: At

the apex in winter: upland, inland or in valleys, in densities proscribed by how much lee there was available, a clan with its 20 or so families could live in a long house; various long houses could assemble according to the local geography. The apex of the pyramid could widen out towards the sea in summer, with clans dispersing from the winter settlement to the corn fields and shellfish beds where warm weather houses would be raised.

If the figure Champlain estimated of 600 men at Chatham is true, there seems no particular pressure on locals to settle into harvesting more when in those times deer herds and fowl flocks, shellfish and fish yields were likely large enough to sustain that number of human animals on a yearly basis; well able to regenerate themselves.

We Have a Choice

The directives of flux and settlement were likely those of individual choice, as well, obviously, as of need, both proscribed by tribal laws. The delineating factors would have been the ratio of the population of humans matched against that of available food, influenced and limited by factors of weather or other men: How many enemies around? How dire the weathers – how had winter sectioned off the yarding deer? How had hurricanes destroyed the berries? What is the availability of winter food; crop success in summer, how much stored; how much fresh water? Whether settlements were large or small, fluid or stable, the bottom line is that there was a duality of seasonal food-quests, one, the hunt after meat and fish and fowl, and the other a horticulture of beans, corn, squash, sunflowers, Jerusalem artichokes. Hunting in the cold, non-planting season, provided you had grown enough corn, dried enough of the very copious fish and shellfish (quahogs and clams) which tribes relied on, smoked enough fowl and herrings, could be perhaps a time of complete freedom to follow game as you needed, *only stopped by the combined paradigm of human population numbers – the requirements of your fellows – as related to the numerical availability of game within tribal land bounds*

Nobody knows for sure, but men like Flying Eagle can recollect enough of his forebears' lives to let me extrapolate as above.

Here, above Stage Harbor Road, to Shore Road, Chatham, where plaques commemorate the Monomoyicks' skirmish with Champlain, and Squanto's death (which took place around the Monomoy River and Pleasant Bay) – we could have had our houses sheltered enough from blizzard, with a brook nearby for water, the same at which we set corn in the summer. A few of us, friends and relatives, elders and warriors, close enough to visit, distant enough to be private, might chose to set up multi-family lodges

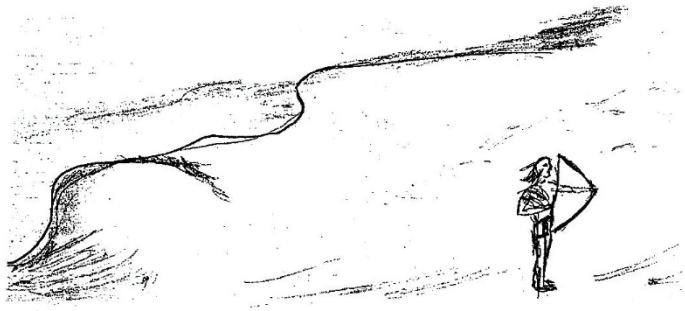
back in the woods, preferring to be nearer to the lake, farther from the stubble of summer. Here in fall and spring we might follow the ducks and geese. We could hunt deer down behind us in the swamps in cold weather. Everything is available from here. Together we would council about defense and trade strategy in special longhouses, under special arbors.

We would move out not so very far, to the open land for summer, or refurbish the house we had stayed in, planting our garden on part of the land, perhaps the rest closed around by grape vines and thickets. Surely, we could fish and clam on Monomoy in the summer warmth, celebrate under the summer moons there, set weirs and nets for herring and eel signaling the arrival of spring and the new year. Groups of us would visit with each other, powwow, dance with clans down the coast or from farther off who were joining us for summer feasts. Our clan might have husked the third harvest of corn even as we went to gather scallops, then left some elders to guard the harvest, take care of the children.

We might have gone, just we two alone, to a more sheltered area, following the geese, separated out the two of us, in a temporary camp where he would hunt fowl, and I would help hang and smoke them. I might have moved camp with my husband towards the community hunt of deer in fall after the migration of fowl was over and some of the ducks and geese had moved upriver. The abundance of fish and the deer and fowl determined, with our harvests, how we lived. Depending on the harvest and what was stored for winter we might hunt a great deal or less so in cold weather, I at home in the garden house, waiting for his return.

We are family and relatives, affectionate within the woods, our lives can be flexible.

Year after year it repeats, changing subtly as nature commands our choices.



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Second Coming

Learning from the animal selves how to move into shelter and out, how to hunt, to plant, and to store, we were a competent and balanced people who had evolved over thousands of years, to live well within the earth. If we were "kind, hospitable," playful, at ease with the world around us, comely, joyful, the new invaders' defensiveness of their manhood perceived through some kind of "superiority" would make them almost deliberately have to misunderstand us.

Though the meeting between Cape Cod and Plymouth Wampanoag, and Separatists Edward Winslow, William Bradford et al, would usher in an age of settlement which would disastrously change the relationship between the European and the invaded from equal trading partners in fish and sassafras and furs (with an occasional incursion of religion zealotry in Canada to accompany the mercantilism) to a dominated (but never beaten) Christianized, enslaved, exiled or assimilated culture – these Algonkquians and their relatives (as well as their Iroquoian enemies) all the way through Canada had been meeting men from across the seas since at least the late 1500s.

The Monomonack of the lookout saw the legendary floating islands with trees on them of 17th century pinnaces pass the spits of the end of Chatham by Cape Malabar. They carried not only fishers and sassafras traders but explorers such as Giovanni Verrazano, Henry Hudson, John Smith, John Sir Samuel Argall, and Thomas Dermer, to name a few. Sir Ferdinando Gorges, backer of the Plymouth expedition, in 1605, and Captains Thomas Hunt and Edward Harlow, soon after, passed to steal off local Indian men from Apaum (Plymouth), Capowack (Martha's Vineyard), and Nauset (outer Cape Cod).

Few stopped here to record it, but Gabriel Archer writing of his expedition's co-captain, Bartholomew Gosnold, did: May 18, 1602 " we sent forth the boat to sound over a breach, that in our course lay off another point, but us called Gilbert Point (Monomoy), who returned us

4, 5, 6 and 7 fathoms over. This day there came unto the ship's side divers canoes, the Indians apparelled as aforesaid." (That is, as Gosnold found them in Newfoundland, with hair, "long, uptied, with a knot in the part... behind the head.") He wrote, "They paint their bodies, which are strong and well-proportioned." They "had about them tobacco and pipes steeled with copper, skins, artificial strings and other trifles to barter; one had hanging about his neck a plate of rich copper, in length a foot, in breadth half a foot, for a breastplate." The ears of all the rest had pendants of copper. One wore his face painted, and his head topped with a headdress of a train of turkeycock feathers. Deer skins and furs were also worn.

Gosnold's interaction was peaceable. He and men like John Smith seemed to keep an open, often admiring, mind. Archer, chronicling for Gosnold, at first wrote of the Indians of Point Gilbert: "These are more timorous than those at Savage Rock, yet very thievish." Soon, Archer would revise his opinion, describing the south Cape inhabitants from Gilbert to the Elizabeth Islands as attractive, graceful, "fair and witty," affectionate to their kin – in spite of himself and that European preconditioning towards prejudgment. But prejudice was something which came with the travelers to these shores (along with piracy). A few bad interactions set up, precipitated what would be the common trajectory of the intersection of histories from now on: restraint by the Indians, misunderstanding by the invaders.

Monomoy Fight

As we have mentioned there is a plaque at Stage Harbor, right near where Indian huts would have been, commemorating a skirmish. Champlain stopped at Chatham one summer and he drew a rendition of its summer gardens. He also drew a conical structure with horns in the shape of a half-moon above it, quite possibly the sacred lodge – possibly a "shaking tent" of a shaman, and behind it, the vanishing shapes of warriors. Champlain was one of the worst snobs history has produced, dividing the world into snobs, of whom he approved, and clods. He disdained anyone who was not a French aristocrat. He spoke with the usual ignorance and contempt of the times about the Indian's religious practices at Stage Harbor. He disparaged the Indians' character and life, calling them "not worth anything," condemning them as thievish, mistrustful before he had any real intercourse with them. In late summer of 1606, Champlain had landed at Mallebarre near Coast Guard beach. Guns had been fired over the heads of Indians to retaliate for a "stolen" kettle. A sailor either from St. Malo, near Tadoussac, or named Malo (which translates to "bad-o") was killed by Nausets over this misunderstanding.

In October of 1607, while his pinnace was anchored off Monomoy, Indians

at Chatham across the harbor from Monomoy feared Champlain's men because of the Nauset incident and because there had been a recent English kidnapping by Captain George Weymouth, of Pokanoket confederacy allies at Apaum (Plymouth). The bad feeling left over from the year before increased. At Stage Harbor (then named Port Fortune), tucked between Monomoy and Chatham, some shots once again were fired – this time over Monomoyicks for investigating an axe. Champlain's cook who was also an expedition leader, saw the local men behaving strangely. Sailors were warned not to stay ashore on the mainland and commanded to return to the anchored ship, but some stayed anyway. Six hundred Nausets and Monomoyicks attacked and killed many of the foreign intruders at dawn. Gunfire from Champlain's ship left a few warriors dead. Champlain, renaming the place "Port Misfortune," wanted revenge for being the lesser in the skirmish. He attempted and failed in kidnapping men by enticing them aboard; they were wise to his ways, and stronger, escaping by outsmarting him. He had done the same after the Nauset fight, but his partner Sieur de Monts had made him relinquish the prisoner. The local men just faded out of sight into the white cedar swamps of the area. Champlain would return after a trip to La Soupconneuse (Martha's Vineyard) however, to massacre some Monomoyicks. In spite of this, Chatham Indians would remain tolerant of later comers, amazingly so, even when their cousin Nausets up the road at Pochet tried to kill later arrivals such as explorer-trader Captain Thomas Dermer and shot at Bradford's exploratory group from First Encounter beach fearing their bad motives. (Squanto had worked as an interpreter for Dermer, leading him to fishing grounds and to trade for beaver furs after he himself had been captured twice into slavery. He would save Dermer from death in 1619, when natives, angry at Captain Thomas Hunt's depredations, took him prisoner. About the episode Dermer wrote in an awkwardly phrased letter to publisher Samuel Purchas, "We had not now that fair quarter among the savages as before, which, I take it, was by reason of our savage's absence [Tisquantum], who desired (in regard of our long journey) to stay with some of our savage friends at Sawahquatooke (Brewster), for now almost everywhere where they were of any strength, they sought to betray us. At Manamock (now called Sutcliffe's Inlets) I was unawares taken prisoner, when they sought to kill mv men whom I left to man the pinnace, but missing of their purpose, they demanded a ransom, which had, I was as far from liberty as before. Yet it pleased God at last, alter a strange manner, to deliver me, with three of them, into my hands, and a little after the chief sachem himself, who, seeing me weigh anchor, would have leaped overboard, hut intercepted, craved pardon, and sent for the hatchets given for ransom, excusing himself by laying the fault on his neighbors; and to he

friends, sent for a canoe's lading of corn, which received, we set him free." (Dermer would be killed at Martha's Vineyard a year later.)

The people who were already here probably were amused, more than at first annoyed, by these helmeted martinets; only motivated to retaliate by the extreme pressure of condescension: an examination of new goods, misinterpreted as a robbery attempt. The statements of Indian "thievishness" were cases of the pot calling the kettle black. After all, what was an axe, when Europeans had robbed off living men from the tribes to take to London for exhibit as curiosities, to own for slaves? Misunderstandings about Indian concepts of property would cause some of the first conflicts. Tribesmen believed that was made belonged to the community. Nobody "owned" an axe, or a kettle. The goods of the English, if they were useful, became part of the group consciousness; a gift to be used. The appropriation of an object would have been met with full return in another kind of object at a later date. Even when a few belongings had been kept, the liquid concept of property as belonging to everyone, and as worth little in itself – a piece of the fluidity of things, an external, not an internal power – had the Europeans understood it, would have negated their concept of "thievery." The elders and warriors and shamans of the Monomoyicks and other environs may well have kept objects of the English, not only to get back at them for their more serious depredations, or to harass them into staying away except for useful trade, but after counselling, perchance to figure out what we would call the "vibes" today of the people who owned the equipment; the spiritual content behind it - thus to better gauge their potential threat.

I wish I could have sat in the wetu of counseling elders to hear what they thought of the arrivals, whose testiness often made them stand at arms, whose armor-covered bodies and bearded faces and long-knived swords, seemed more mechanical than man, unnatural, less than human. (And ultimately, who translated seas, valleys, marshes, forests, sands, into singular areas for intensive singular activities.)

Names (An Undercurrent)

Whatever the original people of the lookout had called their beautiful summer camp, the newcomers did not at first name it after their predecessors. Gosnold called it Point Gilbert. He named it either for Sir Humphrey Gilbert, English explorer who hit the east coast in the 1580s, going down in his ship "The Hind," possibly prompting the writing of "The Tempest," or for Gosnold's peer captain Bartholomew Gilbert, who joined him for part of the expedition. May 19, 1602, Archer chronicling the Gosnold voyage wrote, "We trended the coast southerly: twelve leagues from Cape

Cod we descried a point, with some breach (breaker) a good distance off, and keeping our luff to double it, we came in on the sudden to shoal water; yet well quitted ourselves thereof. This breach we called Tucker's Terror, upon his expressed fear. We passed the breach of Gilbert's Point in 4 or 5 fathoms, and anchored a league...beyond it; between the last two points are 2 leagues...the latitude here is 41 degrees, two thirds." The point Gilbert which he named, may have been a hump protruding near S. Orleans, rather than the southern tip. The tip, he may have named Point Care.

W.S. Nickerson in 'Land Ho' claims that Gosnold was traveling north to south, rather than south to north, and thus that Tucker's is part of Nauset's backside at Mallebarre; that Point Care is inside the Isle of Nausit, near Orleans. Point Gilbert, he says, is 3 miles above Stewart's Bend, making it Monomoy. He interprets the May 12, 1602 data to mean that Point Gilbert is 12 miles south of from Point Care. Henry Kittredge and S.E. Morrison, compatriots of Nickerson's in the 1920s, agree with him.

Map maker L. Dexter extrapolates a spur sticking out into the ocean from Nauset spit which was Point Gilbert. Tim Wood has Gilbert somewhere at Allen Point or James head, moving south with Monomoy to Amos Point of Morris Island. Thoreau says Gosnold's Point Care was the southernmost tip of Monomoy. Other noted historians interpret an "area 12 leagues from Cape Cod" to mean that as Cape Cod was then Provincetown's name, 36 miles (or 12 leagues) away would make Point Care to be in fact, the southern terminus near the rips of historic Monomoy's Tucker's Terror.

Champlain named the southern tip of Nauset spit Cap Batturier, a kind of play on words typical of him: "Battre" means "battered," "batture" is "sand bar" also described in Old French as "*a bank, or bottom mixed with sand, rocks or stones, and which rises to the surface of the water.*" Champlain's Mallebarre,"evil bars," was probably named for the piece of Nauset Harbor at Eastham which he pulled into. It would come to denote on maps of the 1600s the back of the whole area of the sand bars on the east of the Cape from the "Isle of Nausit," in Eastham, north of the piece we are naming Monomoy, on down to the tip of Nauset spit at Monomoy's southernmost end. Explorer Martin Pring, Champlain's contemporary, named Cape Cod in the same manner: Malle Barre. To add to the confusion, on maps of the 1600s the configuration of the terrible shoals of the outer Cape are shown in a long bar, with various spits and isthmuses within. The shoals may be named Mallebarre, while the inner bars are named "Ilse de Nausit."

William Smith in his *History of Chatham*, citing Adrian Block's Dutch map of 1614 shown in a Memorial History of Boston, claims "Cape Mallebarre or Monomoy Point" was printed right on our isle in question. If so, this would be the first use of the Indian name, anglicized. Other sources say he

called it Vlacke Hoecke, flat hook.

In 1619, Captain Thomas Dermer named a piece of "Monomack" as "Sutcliffe's Inlets" after an aristocrat who may have explored the area, but he was the only one who called it that. Sutcliffe's were either the rip at the tip, or perhaps the entrance to the harbor at the northern passage through the place.

William Bradford says in 1620 "Also we passed that point which first showd those dangerous shoals unto them (Gosnold) they called Point Care, and Tucker's Terror, but the French and Dutch to this day call it Malabar, by reason of those terrible shoals." When Bradford, not a bad guy as European invaders went, walked on "surbated" (galled) feet back to Plymouth from what he named as Monomoick after a shallop problem interrupted his trade for corn, it may indeed have been from a channeled Monomoy Point, but more likely it was from the mainland, for Chatham then was named after the tribe itself. And when Good Newes From New England reported that around Nov.11 of 1622 Squanto become sick on board a shallop sent to pick up previously purchased corn at Monomoyick, he too probably was trading on the mainland. A few days later at his death near the Monomoy River which leads into Pleasant Bay, he may have been moored in the same Port Fortune that Champlain had used and that both he and Adrian Block had renamed Port Misfortune or Unlucky Harbor. *(And in my own life it was. As an acquaintance once observed, who had been a refuge manager of Monomoy, the place around Stage Harbor seemed to have a curse on it; little turned out right in its vicinity.)*

The Dutch entrepreneur, Isaac De Rasieres, writing in 1627, says that Bradford et al were afraid to pass Cape Malabar, seeming to mean Monomoy, yet he uses the name for the whole of Cape, or at least her eastern side.

In 1651 and 1676 there is a long strip of shoals and sand named Nausit with Bay de Mallebarra north of it and Cape de Mallabarra at the south tip. Josellyn, in "Two Voyages..." written in the late 1600s, says that "Cape Cod Point is called Point Care as well as Tucker's Terror by the English and by the French and Dutch, Cape Mallacar."

Because what we will come to know as Monomoy, and what was then a fairly united Nauset spit, split on and off the land, names used for it as a whole would apply to pieces of it. For the most part, denoting the whole spit would continue to be the name Mallebarre ("Baxos" or "bad bars" on Spanish maps of the early 1600s) while Cap Malabar (also meaning evil bars) named Monomoy at its southernmost terminus on English, Dutch and French maps.

From 1635 on, Chatham proper was still named various versions of Monomoyick or Monemoy. The name Monamoit, adapted from the

tribal group's name, is also found (as is the tribal denotation) spelled as Monomoit, Manamoit, Manamoiyick, Monomoick or Monomoyick, Monamoy, Monamy, Monemy, and so on.

A 1675 map named our strand as the Fields of Monemy, meaning either the marsh fields or the cod grounds belonging to mainland Monemy. While Chatham remained Monemoy in 1685, a John Cotton map of the late 1600s seems to call the isthmus and not the mainland Monemoy.

The name Mallebarre would be transferred away from northerly Nauset to Monomoy's tip and then back to Monomoy's whole (once more with the 1600s spelling of Malabar) in the very early 1700s. Then Malabar will disappear from Monomoy, appearing once in a while for Nauset and east Cape shoals north of her through the 1700s. Monomoy was the name used for Chatham in 1711 when the town petitioned to incorporate (long overdue, and finalized in 1712.) Yet in 1725, map maker Homann places the moniker Monamoy right on the island and by then Chatham was appearing as the mainland moniker. The name Monomoy for our elusive place did not really stick until well after the Revolution, while the "Monomoit Great Beach" seemed to be a name of preference in written documents from the 1700s to 1800s.

Another name for the island per se was Webb's Island, shown in the English Pilot, Fourth Book of 1689, and on various charts and maps, especially the Whiddah and other maps of Captain Cyprian Southack, from 1702 to the 1730s, even on into the 40s – while during this time Monemy would be conserved as the name for the mainland. In the early 1700s, the name Wreck Cove was attached to the northwest part of Monomoy, Wreck Point to the southern terminus, and both names were occasionally transferred to the whole place as Rack or Wreck Cove and Wreck Point through the 1720s and beyond.

Sandi or Sandy Point was also a name for the whole of the isle below Potanamaquut (spelled a number of ways) in written deeds of 1711 and 1729, although it was not on maps. Starting with the Mitchell map of 1755 occasionally Sandy Point will name the southern terminus of an otherwise unnamed Monomoy, and until 1775 that name along with the pre-Revolutionary revival of Cape Malabar, seemed to be the names of choice.

In1774, Malabar had been unambiguously transferred from Nauset once more, to Monomoy's tip. In 1793, the names, Sandy Point or Monomy appear, no Malabar in sight. To confuse matters more, one map of 1798, Holland's English Coastal Pilot, names Monomoy spit Sandy Point and Malabar, but calls the south end of South Beach, Monomay Point Once again transference of the name from body to terminus and back seems to have been the case. Sandy Point had started out in the early 1700s as

a name for the north piece of the island at its attachment to land. It may have even been given to Morris Island in the late 1600s and early 1700s, only to be transferred to Monomoy in the early 1700s when Morris Island and Monomoy glued together by flats. Sandy Point would continue to be a name which would stick for Monomoy through the 1800s on charts and in written documents, to denote both the isthmus from Inward Point to its southern tip, as well as the terminus alone. While Sandy Point in maps of the post-Revolutionary era would replace what had been known as Wreck Point at the southern tip, Wreck Cove would apply to the northwest of the island off and on for centuries.

In the early 1800s, Cape Mallebarre and Mallebarre Beach once more became popular on charts and in coast pilots and were even used until the end of the 1800s to denote all of Monomoy. Its charted and written appellation continued also as Sandy Point, but now the name Monomoy seemed to begin to stick when it was settled intensively from 1830 on, while Cape Mallebarre began to be transferred back to its treacherous tip. Its colloquial name was often simply the Point throughout the mid to late 1800s and on into the early 20th century. Now, in the mid to late 20th century and in the 21st century, it is firmly called Monomoy, after its original inhabitants.

5

English Invaders

Denudation of virtually all oak woods in England, eroded and scarce farmlands, religious persecution, a wish to find upward mobility outside of a rigid class structure; in short, sociological motivations galvanized by ecological imperatives pushed Englishmen to these shores. If exploited nature made history overseas by stressing a class structure into a religious revolt (really an economic revolt in the name of an equalizing religious reformation), its promise here tempted, contorted men into a new historical shape born of inter-cultural conflict arising from the use and misuse of, and reaction to, the land itself.

Monomoy Changes Hands

Some self-imposed exiles, some exiles banished from "Plimoth" by its General Court, some traders who came to live amongst the Indians in various places to deal for the then more plentiful otter and beaver furs (Cape Cod National Seashore writes "…wolf, bobcat, mountain lion, porcupine, and beaver… were present here 400 years ago") as well as to collect sassafras and salt fish for European markets, had been living in the woods in places around Yarmouth's Bass Hole, off "Slut's Bush" in Nauset, and at Provincetown, without very much changing the ecology of these places, without converting it from forest to farm; living as outdoorsmen in satisfied sufficiency off the land. In the 1630s, "substantial" Englishmen left Plimoth for the Cape, for Sandwich, for Nauset, for Chatham. They wanted land away from the smothering church, land on which to grow commodities for sale to a population expanding during the Great Migration years of the 1640s from England, away from her civil strife to the Massachusetts Bay area.

The first Monomoyick named in English colonial records was Mattaquason, sachem of the Monomoyicks in 1643. In 1640 he may have allowed settler Elisha Hedge to use Monomoy for winter pasture.

This is not a Monomoy story per se but it is interesting to note: In 1656 William Nickerson, who had been homesteading on Monomoyick lands

for many years, traded with Mattaquason for the rights to pastureland on Manomoit (Chatham) as long as sachems weren't growing corn there. This may have included some of the Monamoit Great Beach (what we know now as Monomoy) or it may only have been a piece around Oyster Pond, of swamp, meadows and upland to "be laid out." But there was a misunderstanding on both sides. If a bear appeared in three days after the trade of a boat for the land use, the deal was off; if a deer, the deal was on. Bear or not, Mattaquason refused to give over a deed to Nickerson, who finally sued him for it many years later, in 1672. Will Nickerson lost the suit, yet for some reason, in a few months, both father and son John Quason deeded to him a tract of land running from east of Oyster Harbor, all the way to Ryder's Cove and Scatteree, in return for a shallop (small boat with a sail), cloth, kettles, axes hoes, knives, wampum and a hat. Nickerson has been portrayed as some kind of pilgrim liberal who wanted land for his whole clan in a sort of commune; as a man who got along well with the Indians, but poorly with the uptight English down the road apiece. While he was fighting endlessly for the rights to his land claim against the Plimoth General Court, who said it belonged to the Old Comers under the original patent and that purchase from the Indians was illegal; living in his thatched, one and a half story abode with loft – tribesmen were still thriving down near Stage Harbor where Indians traditionally set their corn. Fields were fertile near the great oaks and cedars of not yet named Chatham. Will Nickerson, to stake a claim to his clan homestead, feuded with the old fusties at Plimoth for his rights to land that was neither of theirs.

What made the Quason family change their attitude to Will? Did the son with the English first name persuade the father? Did Quason Jr. simply like Nickerson, perhaps trusting him because of his arguments with the Plimoth fathers who had less right to land deeded to them by the Crown than Nickerson had to land loaned to him by the men who possessed it? Did the Quasons have the consent of the tribe, as they would have needed in the past? Did the Quason family realize that they were, in English terms, selling for permanent use whether mainland property to Nickerson or did they think they were loaning usage in return for payment?

Purchase from Mattaquason probably meant rights of use. Indians would give what English reported as "tribute," gifts of respect, to their leaders, in return for consideration when land use rights were given out to various families for certain hunting or berrying grounds. Land deals were subject to the usual misinterpretations between cultures as several authors have noted: Indians did in fact often think they were lending for use, not selling irredeemably when goods for property changed hands. Even the type of objects whites gave, cloth, axes and so forth, for what they thought was a

permanent exchange for the land were similar in content to native gifts and were probably expected to do the same thing: secure usage rights, not permanent takeover.

Monomoy itself offers a clue, for within less than 20 years the Great Beach became overrun by colonists using it as common salt hay pasture for their cattle, hogs, horses and sheep. In 1690, white men's "horses were hunted from said beach by the Indeans," who were extremely annoyed at the depredations the animals did to their corn. Elisha Hedge, Hugh Stewart, David Melville, with an Eldredge and a Mitchell, had petitioned the General Court in Plimoth for permission to buy the land from the Indians so they might pasture their cattle, hogs, sheep and horses there. John Quason, Mattaquason's son, in 1694 formally deeded some of Monomoy Great Beach to Elisha Hedge and his partners to continue to use for pasture and for salt hay harvesting. They would sell more of it in 1711.

The Monomoyicks must have seen the handwriting on the wall. Perhaps there was a sense of join or be beaten. If English horses would trample Indian corn, what else could one do but get some worth for the land already taken?

6

Hooves and Roofs
The World of the Grasses: A Pastureland

Past Grasses Used

For whatever reasons land was given, the world of "marsh and sedge" which they took was so important to colonials as to cause court battles. Geology made the marsh, and the marsh in turn sheltered birds to eat, fish to catch, whales which beached, and most importantly at first, grasses. When we look at marsh, its taken for granted vegetation often tawny, its surface mucky with peat (not the kind of freshwater bogs used for fuel), we forget that it was divided into uses, once common, now esoteric. These uses were the very reason why settlers from England wanted to own coveted pieces of places like the Great Beach of Monomoy.

As the seventeen hundreds rolled in, houses built by ship's carpenters for men who both fished and farmed in the fog of the elbow's inlets looked out snugly at the area they may have used to pasture their horses, sheep, cattle. Farming was existence, with some supplemental fishing by nets, primitive drag seines and weirs, and out of small boats during fish runs especially. Grist and sawmills ground and cut; water wheels worked. Blacksmiths repaired. Oxen dragged loads. Soon, cod would be fished for up north, as it had been since the 1500s, with new, larger boats organized to go after it. But at first, salt pastures were lifelines.

European wetland, upland meadow, and, especially, cultivated cereal grasses had been used for thatching roofs, for creating storage, for pasture and hay. Until uplands could be cleared, and cereal grasses planted, the practices were followed here, in particular with the different fresh and dried reeds, rushes, sedges and grasses of the new fields and wetlands. *(In the saltiest areas were salt grasses, in brackish areas were sedges and certain rush-like grasses, in still less salty areas were cattails and rushes and reeds.)*

In the old country ancient mattresses and floors took European cereal grasses – oat, barley, wheat straw as "rushes" for stuffing and strewings.

They stuffed bedding with marsh reeds added to the mix of these along with those of horsehair and down. These grasses and reeds also acted as floor coverings to create warmth, to conceal earth or stone. The same grasses made rush lights of bound plants dipped into tallow and burnt. Here the cattails and phragmites of swamps could substitute for these uses.

New World Grasses

In England, another cultivated crop grass straw, rye, along with wetland reeds and heather had been used for thatching roofs. Here the low salt marsh's *Spartina alterniflora* became known as "thatch grass". It, with phragmites and the other rushes of freshwater marshes, could be used. The high marsh grasses of *Spartina patens*, "salt hay," also would do in a pinch.

Rush, reed, brackish and upland grasses (cattail and bulrush especially) usually, rather than the salt grasses, with vegetable fiber such as that from dogbane, had made woven mat coverings for Indian *wetus*, mats for clothing, and more. Storage caches in the sand were lined with dried blades of these plants, covered with vegetable fiber mats. Mats were used for drying surfaces to sun dry corn, berries, fish, meat. Wampanoag baskets were woven of fibers twined together, such as cattails, thatch grass, dogbane, nettle as well as from the inner bark of trees like cedar and basswood, especially on the outer Cape.

Where rocks could be found, they were used for fireplace hearths (even for parts of houses like the ship's bottom house of Succonnesset built in 1638) or for foundations containing small root cellars. Not many stones on Monomoy; for the few who lived there, pits would have been dug in sand, such as those later used commercially for turnips, lined with dried marsh grasses; caches similar to those of the Indians.

(Often however, storage for colonials was in lofts, by fireplaces, in sheds at the back of houses. These, tacked on at the north for the coolness, would by the 1600s, create the "saltbox" farmhouse from the narrow gabled, long Tudor Hall with its high-pitched roof, which had been adapted from the medieval English cottage. By the late 1600s, the saltbox would be built as a whole unit. Salt fish, smoked meat, onions, apples, flour were placed in various sized barrels which coopers manufactured of local pine, steaming it like ships' planks, surrounding it with, bending it into, metal hoops with wooden mallets. But this was a damp place. Wooden barrels might not be enough to prevent mildew rot.)

In coastal areas in England, marram, the same as our beach grass (*Ammophila sp.*) had made tightly woven mats to use as tarpaulins to cover goods, occasionally roofs, and to weave fairly water-resistant baskets. (The record is unclear as to whether colonists used beach grass

fiber matting much in the new area.)

Since medieval times the Old-World straws such as rye had braided barrels which accommodated storage along with the coopered wooden ones. Here in the New World, cheap, dry barrels could be made at home without wood as they had been since medieval times, of rushes and grasses, of cattails and phragmites, and corn husks, as well as from whatever wheat and rye and barley had been planted, twisted into ropes, and sewn together into barrels or quickly made baskets.

Terrible erosion of dunes in places like Provincetown began to happen by the 1700s. It was partly from cutting down nearby trees, partly from stray animals grazing the beach grass. Perhaps beach grasses used for ancient matting and storage baskets or coops also exacerbated the erosion. The record is unclear. Whether beach grass was used or not, it is known that the dried eel grass of the wrack zone were also gathered and used for wrapping stored goods, for packing, and for covering storage pits.

In essential kitchen gardens on the mainland's cleared fields, dried S. patens was often used for a crop-covering mulch, while wrack and seaweed and eelgrass might be added to it to fertilize crops – along with herring, menhaden and horseshoe crabs - all plentifully available on the isthmus. Both Spartinas, with the eelgrass of the subtidal areas, could be mixed with mud for chinking and for insulation. And as some of the earliest housing was of wattle and daub, (willow withes mixed with chinking), the grass and mud were essential.

Pasture and Fodder

The clover, orchard grass, legumes, alfalfa and others we know as hay, as fresh fodder in pasture, and, as grasses planted to keep cultivated fields in good condition, were gradually introduced by the 1800s. Colonial English hay when available, had been largely barley with winter and summer wheat, all grown from the earliest times here as crops while "rye from March to harvest" showed too much temperament to do well on most of the Cape.

Other European field grasses such as timothy and red top and some fescues, a few of which grew indigenously, were planted or came over on ships in packing hay to mix in with some of the native grasses. Although there may have been more natural upland fields and inland wet meadows on the Cape in the past then there are now because there was documented more ground and subsurface fresh waters in the past before draining and erosion by deforestation and over grazing diminished them, there were not enough of these niches to feed all the farms' hooves. So, in relatively limited farmlands, where many homesteads were only about 100 acres,

saltmarsh could serve the community's flesh bearing animals, while grain could be planted in upland clearings.

Until English pasture could be made from cleared land, the ubiquitous waving saltmarsh meadow provided the most plentiful forage. (With so many uses, it must have seemed like a live loving friend.) Reverend James Freeman writes in 1802 that in Chatham, "very little English hay is cut, the inhabitants rely on salt-hay." The Irish and some coastal English and Scots had pastured sheep in salt marsh fog back across the sea.

Here where "Chatham makes the fog" some of the thick-wooled archaic, Dorset type of English range animals would gnaw similar grasses down to the bone. Here the floppy, horse-hair like *Spartina patens* foddered not just sheep, but pigs, domestic geese, even chickens, who also ate the grass seeds even as wild geese and ducks did. However, there are long-forgotten subtle differences in which brand of saltmarsh grass was prime.

Marsh hay, *S. patens*, could make animals "sickly, to lose heart," (Cronon). Once again, the world of fresh water affected the world of man by affecting the world of grass. Sedge, often a plant of sandy pond edges, of brackish wetlands, of sandy swale pannes, of which there can be a good many on Monomoy, was a preferred munch for livestock (as it is for smaller mammals such as voles who love to graze on sedge and its seed heads.) Bullrush tubers were good eats, too. At the edges of saltmarsh where fresh water intrudes pressing up through the sands from that trapped rain and those underground lenses were gourmet black grasses, the *Juncus spp.* which sheep especially like. Cows ate this too, although it could make their milk smell. So, whilst the brackish grasses perhaps lifted domestic animal spirits while fattening their flesh, salt hay did remain in use, especially for cows, oxen and for assembling into winter hay bales.

The "Fields of Monomoy" were fodder heaven off the southeast Cape, consisting of plenty of "sedge and meadow." This was an area where colonists' domesticated animals, particularly horses, were farmed. The "meadow" was of salt grass, even as now. However, the "sedge" implied that the brackish wetlands of the area were then more plentiful. Perhaps more rivulets from inland Chatham lakes emptied out through the peninsula than now. Perhaps, along with *Juncus* (black grass) and the small sedges of sandy wet edges, there were more cattails, bullrushes, streams at which the cattle could linger and drink. Perhaps the Indians had come there to find wetland rushes and wide grass blades for the weaving of their mats. Perhaps the place combined more of freshwater swamp with saltwater marsh than it does now, making it a storehouse of vegetable matter of all kinds. Monomoy may also have had some upland soils in the colonial era where livestock could enjoy fresh grasses near springheads in fields

where blue grass and foxtail could colonize. It certainly had little bluestem on those fields. An ungulate snack of choice, introduced blue joint grass, may have grown in its less salty wetlands.

The few sea farms on Monomoy might have grown crops as well as those small kitchen gardens which could endure in heavily fertilized patches of sand. Remember that the Indians were planting corn there. Corn does not flourish in areas of salty soil, so this obviously implies that there was good planting soil on the Monomoy Great Beach then, unlike now.

All in all, the sea edge, with or without the best grasses of brackish areas, functioned well enough to support animals from oxen to horses, to cattle and sheep and pigs, grown for local food, hides, traction, transportation. Eel grass, too, at the edge of the water and sea, fed livestock, as it did the oft-eaten Brant geese; and pigs often tusked around for whatever they could get of marsh and eel grasses' sustenance, of tidal flats' mollusks, before they were moved back up into the woods and thickets to root on acorns, buried nuts and tubers (as they had been in England from May to November) when the flats were unforageably frozen.

About that hay assembled into bales: Marsh of salt hay became an early cash crop. Hay of the "best quality" was reaped in late August through fall. Spring hay was sold. Hay of "meaner quality" (off-season) was gathered. Salt hay and salt thatch, along with eel grass and black grass was cut and baled, shipped by scow and wagoned on ox carts to the inland. The marshes were roads on which "luggers" could transport farm goods to shallops or ketches or schooners waiting offshore; sail and row goods back inshore. Men scythed the grasses towards the water. Women and the young followed, raking it into piles. Long poles levered those stacks onto those shallow boats waiting in the tidal creeks or onto draft wagons fitted with wide wheels, dragged by horses with special wooden shoes. (Even cows pastured on soggy marsh were fitted with special shoes so as not to sink irrevocably into muck.) If the marsh was too soggy, salt hay could be bound into squares, rested on straddles above the twice daily influx of tides, and picked up by work horse when they were dry enough or the cold weather froze them. In a charming description by Mitchell and Griswold in *Hiking Cape Cod*, hayers would rest to eat cuke and butter sandwiches and to drink "switchel." A recipe in *Putting Food By* for that thirst-quenching, energy producing beverage is as follows:

1 cup light brown sugar raw; 1 cup apple cider vinegar; 1/2 cup molasses; 1 tablespoon of ground ginger – all mixed with a quart of cold nearby spring water. (Idyllic, *nest-ce pas?*)

(To this day, although the reeds and rushes and cereal or other grasses are seldom used, some people still use eel grass and marsh hay for ancient

uses of mulch, fertilizer, insulation, chinking and packing. In late summer, you can still see it being baled and poled up the inlets on flat bottomed scows, inside Sandy Neck.)

Grass is Flesh as Grass is Cash

The mottos could have been, where here, as on the western plains a century later grass would sustain life – especially marketable life – "Kine to the salt-grass, yields you cash," or "Hay into bales, there will be sales."

It was the transformed grass of marsh then which enabled not only primary local sustenance, but trade in farm goods in their original alive skins, as well as remade into secondary goods. Places like Chatham began to export the surplus products of Monomoy's fields of grass to Boston during the Great Migration of the 1640s as both transpo on the hoof: horses, and meat and dairy makers: cattle, along with sheep and hogs. (By the 1800s, Timothy Dwight would report herds of wild horses on the Cape.)

From the grasses came such primary needs as: fresh and salt pork, "well-fatted grass beef by the pound with Tallow," veal, summer season mutton, stall-fed mutton, even ducks by the pound. The sale of foods like fall and spring potatoes, or "Indian corn from March to harvest," other vegetables were enabled by salt marsh mulch and packing. Secondary commodities such as raw and tanned hides, local shoes of "neat's leather," yarn socks, "good merchantable sheep's wool by the pound," wool flannel, were also by the grace of marsh fields allowed a transmogrification into trade items. American cheese, butter (made in summer for local consumption, in winter imported), were also byproducts of the original grass, transformed through the beasts which ate of it.

Alice Earle in Homelife in Colonial Days offers this wonderful picture of early farm life: "No farmer or his wife need fear any king when on every home farm was found food, drink, medicine, fuel, lighting, clothing, shelter. Homemade was an adjective that might be applied to nearly every article in the house." But as many arrivals were emigrating merchants, craftsmen, shoemakers, they farmed only to live, yearning for the day when they could live only to make a profit by their trades.

7

The World of Inaccessibility: Pirates?

In the 1600s, even as men invaded others' lands in the New World to practice survival by planting and fishing, outlaws hunted the seas. As the salt grass plains, the scrolls of mud flats at Monomoy became increasingly uninhabited by Indians, not yet colonized by Europeans, while herders pastured the north end, these outlaws may have roamed in and out of the south of this place of desolation, moored near its wind washed grasses. (Sand points, marsh and inlets, coves and spits and changing channels and mist could conceal from sight in space a brazen ship and her arrogant masters then, even as small boats could run under the law later during Prohibition.)

While Europe warred with itself over there for royal rights of succession, for new national boundaries, pirates sailed into the New World. Pirates from France, Spain, the Netherlands, and England fought over gold, molasses, rum, slaves; the wealth in and transferred through the West Indies, Hispaniola and the Antilles. Piracy offered a way out from class oppression, a way to seek revenge on "fat merchants" for whom many a mariner had made fortunes, without himself seeing a fair share of the profits. Half rebel, half criminal, the brotherhoods could be sharing and egalitarian with each other, merciless to those they plundered. (Romanticism aside, these men were often keenly brutal "depravateers.")

The heyday of the Spanish Main and their enemies, the English buccaneers, peaked in the 1690s. Although for the most part these men (and occasionally women) plundered from Spanish America, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Caribbean Sea, the cargoes from North America's settlers were enticing. As the English made inroads in the trade of beaver fur, whale oil, salt cod taken from French turf in Canada, the English, French and Spanish and even Dutch pirates could find the Gulf of Maine good pickings.

The ruffles, ribbons, pistols, and rum of piracy swept the Cape. Ships sent back to England from Plymouth had been robbed for weatherboard (softwood clapboard) and furs as early as the 1620s. In October of 1684, Chatham's own William Nickerson and a friend were cleared of charges for carrying off a pirate in custody on Nantucket, possibly to Monomoy.

Not so far away, in 1689, a brig was taken by pirates in Vineyard Sound. Incidents involving the murder of a Nickerson (not William) and the defense of another kinsman by Sam Adams himself, turned out to be high seas' highwaymen's assassinations. In 1690, Chatham feared the French outlaws might invade because the town was so exposed.

If Monomoy offered grass it also offered privacy. But did pirates really roam there?

Webb's Island

Thoreau talked of it nearly one hundred and fifty years ago, the island which was Cape Cod's mini-Atlantis, name of Webb's. In 1790 it is writ, "When the English first settled the Cape, there was an island off Chatham, three leagues (9-12 miles) distant, called Webb's Island, containing twenty acres, covered with red cedar or savin. The inhabitants of Nantucket used to carry wood from it. This island has been washed away for a century. A large rock that was upon the island and which settled as the earth washed away, now marks the place; it rises as much above the bottom of the sea as it used to rise above the surface of the ground." The tradition was passed down in local tales, but nobody quite had the time nailed as to when it sunk, only that it was gone well before the War for Independence.

It was said to have been used in particular by pirates roaming east on Nantucket Sound's inner passage from nearby Tarpaulin Cove on Naushon Island. (From the tip of Falmouth to the tip of Chatham, the area of Vineyard and Nantucket Sounds have a misty history unwritten of pirate hang outs.) Amos Otis in his "Genealogies" written last century speaks of a "Stump Grounds" off of shoals at Monomoy's end, where cedars as "big as wagon wheels" still floated up and were pulled in, by anchor draggers, by 1833 and supposes this is the sunken place.

The "three leagues" distance from land to Webb's was a league at least beyond what early explorers such as Gosnold had charted as the distance between Point Gilbert and Point Care, the tip of Mallebarre spit where the awful rip of Tucker's Terror hung. However, if by the time of Webb's, Monomoy had moved further south off the land, and if the distance were being calculated from a point nearer to James Head than to Allen's Point, the 1790s writer describes the exact locale of Monomoy.

Long thought a mystery, one only must peruse some old charts to see Webb's Island clearly where Monomoy is. It was so named as early as 1635 on an elusive English map. By 1689, the English Coastal Pilot, Fourth Book, places the name Webb's Island with the Seal Islands next to the island also delineated as Monemy. Captain Cyprian Southack, a famed pirate hunter, continues the use of the name from 1706 through the 1730s. "Web's" is

Monomoy, clearly, on Bowen's 1744 map.

But how did it have cedar on it? If brackish areas become swampy, white cedar can come in, slowly growing to enormous widths over periods as long as thousands of years; it was plenteous on the Chatham mainland. Red cedar can colonize back dunes. Perhaps on unmolested Monomoy, there were stands of one or both trees. Thoreau mentions seeing trees of indeterminate species on Monomoy through a telescope as late as 1857. J.A. Nickerson reports aspen or maple trees near Shooter's Island in the 1920s. Hospital Pond had a fairly mature stand of Cape mini trees reported by E.T. Moul in 1969 in "Flora of Monomoy Island" in the 1960s, probably of aspen and pitch pine, black cherry, maybe with some red cedar, too.

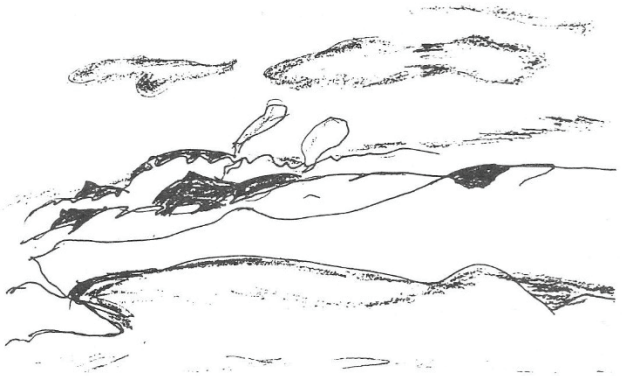
But it may be that the cedar came from a mainland piece which detached and reconnected to Monomoy: As we have noted Cape sands recurve their tips, spread like taffy; slow waters trap small islands, like flies in a spider nest or a sandy candy pull. Flats fill in, acreage disappears. Storms create breaches which release furious waters. Pieces may spin, glue, break off, move. The cedar on Webb's, uncharacteristic of a barrier spit, may have come from a series of pieces shown on maps of the 1630s. Near to Monomoy, an island Champlain drew seems to have broken in two. A triangular piece seems to have moved south by 1651 through 1685 (even as another piece glued to Morris Island extended). The broken piece appears to have glued onto the south tip of our spit in the 1690s. Named "Wreck Point" by the 1700s, the piece is curved oddly against the hydrologic rules, to the east, rather than recurving to the west, retaining the exact same configuration it had before it may have circled down to Monomoy's tip.

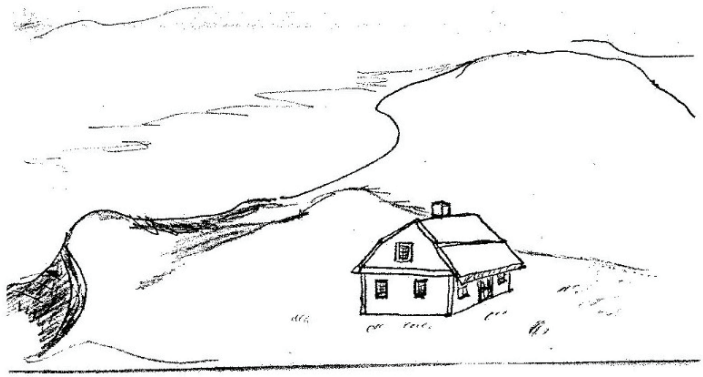
The islet Champlain showed was in fact of about 20 acres, "*remplis de bois*," filled with wood. This was the one which was shown traveling on the early maps ending up reglued onto our spit's base. However, Wreck Point on Webb's Island got there, it, along with three dots named as the Seal Islands, were shown on Southack's maps as alive and well until he denoted them as "Sunken," sometime in the 1730s.

There were two islands between the mainland and Monomoy on Champlain's map. The split and moveable piece was named by some, Ram's Island; its Indian name was Cotchpinicut. Ram's Island was in fact more likely the smaller island north of Cotchpinicut on Champlain's map. Ram's maintained its circular, smallish shape by maps of the 1650s. By the 1700s as flats filled in between the channel of Webb's Island and mainland Monemy, Ram Island resurfaced on maps, and was mentioned in deeds of that time as well, tucked somewhere between Nauset spit and the north tip of Monomoy, fairly near to where Strong Island would later appear, only to sink in a storm of the 1850s.

In 1738 when six lots of the Monamoit Great Beach were divided between three claimants, the top piece rested between Potanamacut and Inward Point near Morris Island. The bottom piece of Monomoy Great Beach was, as late as 1738, named as a separate channeled isle on documents of land disputes. The piece was called Webb's Island. "And of ye Marsh yt. Lays to the northward of a place called Webb's Island, three lots were given, one to each claimant." This cinches it. Whether or not there was cedar on it, there was a Webb's at the bottom of Monomoy. Voila, case solved: the southern triangle of Monomoy has 2 names, "Wreck Point" and "Webb's." As so often happened, a name of a piece became transferred to the whole, and vise versa. When the Wreck Point tip sunk, sometime between the 1730s, and 1772, Webb's, the pirate haunt, disappeared; the name soon to vanish off both charts and written documents.

Wreck Point left "only a flat stone" changing, as W.S. Nickerson suggests, to Bearse's shoals.





8

The Wreck Cove Tavern

In 1711 several changes occurred around Monomoy and Chatham. The town petitioned for incorporation. The "Quason Purchase" of 1711 divided land containing tracts in Harwich, Chatham, Orleans, Pochet, and the Great Beach, which was Monomoy, plus the "Island between," Morris Island, into parcels. Four reservations of only about 20 acres each were kept for Quason family members and heirs, the rest of the land was subdivided and sold or granted to various Indians and English alike. This so-called Quason Purchase allowed Monomoy to be turned over, through the General Court, into English hands. In the same year, conflicts with the French were aggravated into war as we shall see. Privateers threatened Monomoy and Chatham. Sperm whales were "discovered" off Nantucket.

Colonial towns needed inns the way they needed churches, as public meeting houses. If the invading settlers had been surviving before, now they were becoming colonizing entrepreneurs. The inn was a center for business and unofficial politics even as a church could be a meeting house for the sacred and the political. The first European man unquestionably to go out to Monomoy point was one William Eldridge, who set up a tavern at the northwest end in 1711, by what was then a good harbor around the northwest area later to be known as Inward Point but then known as Rack or Wreck Cove. (Frederick Freeman, in 1862, maintains the tavern was at the south near Wreck Point, and then moved up in time to near Wreck Cove.) Wherever it was, Eldridge had bought his piece of Monomoy from Elisha Hedge.

A Trade Post?

In the 1700s the English colonials around and on Monomoy practiced mercantilism with the surpluses of their survival. The sale of agricultural products, whale oil, various grades of salt cod such as "dunfish" (an inferior but long-lasting grade) to the hot West Indies and the southern colonies had been going on since Plimoth Colony had established itself. By the 1670s the coastal and West Indian trade was beginning to become important to the Cape. By at least 1675, Thomas Huckins of Barnstable was sailing rum and molasses to and from the West Indies to supply his Tavern out of his own fleet of sloops. Families like those of the Otises and Gorhams would follow suit. Did the Monomoy tavern too, accessible to the sea as it was, have a small set of 60-ton brigs, sloops, or schooners?

A Whale House?

Long finned pilot whales, more plentiful then, well may have beached on Monomoy, as they did on Sandy Neck and the Lower Cape, and still do elsewhere on the Cape. "These whales strand in the waves." They would be collected by those licensed to do so by the Crown or the town.

Nearshore whaling from 30 foot long, rowed or single-sail, double-ended, flat-bottomed, canoe-like, boats, with small crews also drove the mammals to shore. Some of the earliest teams hired for their skill, brains, and daring were Monomoyicks with names like Quansett. These men taught Englishmen to whale local waters. It was said of the animals at Great Island, Wellfleet, for instance, that "When they come within our harbor, boats surround them. They are as easily driven to shore as cattle or sheep are driven on land." To call out an alarm as they were sighted drifting to shore, or near enough to get them in small boats, a tavern licensed by individual towns was used such as that one at Jeremy's Point, Great Island, in the 1700s, on a place not dissimilar from ours.

The man who built the Monomoy tavern, William Eldridge, may have done so to sight whales. If no tavern existed in a place, there was other housing for sighters and boatmen. "Ye whale housing" on Sandy Neck in 1715 was in "large permanent structures with cellars in which New England rum doubtless was stored against the cold and long evenings," as Donald Trayser writes. These contained bunks to sleep in. Nearby they would render the creature's oil out from its blubber in half-acre try yards. Monomoy probably had no yard, for wood would have had to be barged down on "luggers." So, more likely, the littler whales would have been carved up on the spot for their head melons which gave a barrel of high-grade oil apiece to be used as a high grade lubricant, as well as for light. Their flesh of pork-like blubber was cut into strips and fried up like

chitlins or taken home to salt and dry for food, or to use for fertilizer.

There was another whale which was chased ashore to be dragged to the try house and rendered for oil or stripped merely for its "bone," leaving the blubber to rot on shore. That was the 60-ton Atlantic right whale. These slow moving, large baleen whales were just beginning to be fished out in local waters and would be scarce by the Revolution. (Named the "right" whale because they were the right ones to hunt, easy to catch, moving slowly and floating after capture.) In 1711, the toothed sperm whale began to be chased for its enormous headcase full of a similar quality oil to that which the smaller toothed pilot whales had contained. Spermaceti would supply the illuminant of choice by the 1740s. Off of Nantucket's Atlantic side, in the deeper oceans, they were sought. Monomoy was close to their grounds. Did any of the local whalers' loose corporations disembark from the locus of Monomoy, so convenient to both Nantucket as well as to the new southern grounds?

Around 1711/12, new changes in hull design and rigging, created the schooner. Relatively big schooners soon allowed men to load smaller whale boats aboard, thus enabling them to chase the old brands of whale as well as the new onto grounds such as the Grand Banks of Canada, where they might fish for cod as well on the same trips. Perhaps they chased some of the very sea mammals they had seen off Monomoy into their northern waters.

By the 1700s we were venturing away from the area immediately around the Cape, north to Canada, down to the Carolinas, edging beyond to the Gulf of Mexico, following the commodity of whales. The scarcity of both right and sperm animals in local nearshore and deep shore waters would make men chase up to Canada's Belle Isles, across to Greenland by the 1740s; they would head up even further north to the Arctic circle and Baffin's Bay by the Revolution, still combining trips for cod and whales. By 1765, Americans hit the north of South America, and by 1774 they were aiming down as far as the Falklands. Around Africa into the Indian Ocean, they chased them; after the Revolution, the other way, around the Horn, into the Pacific – on to whale in places like Australia by the 1800s. On up to the northwest near its arctic circle they sailed, their 150-ton schooners changing to 300-ton barks by the 1840s, chasing bowheads, wiping out gray whales after the Gold Rush opened up California.

Sometimes trade would follow on the heels of whaling, as it opened new areas; even as trade sometimes found new whaling grounds.

A Tavern

The Wreck or Stewart Tavern was licensed by the Crown through ordinances from the town. The charters for inns gave them responsibilities as literally "public" houses under English law, run only by "considerable

men," responsible adults who could be trusted, in the knightly Hospitaler tradition, to keep one's privacy without gouging the pocketbook. Thought to be men of the world, inn keepers were often sought after for advice.

Was the place a two and a half story Georgian, clapboard covered, deal wood paneled house, with symmetrical windows beside the door and two big center chimneys, like inns of the early 1700s still standing at Sandwich town green and in Yarmouth? More likely it was a ship's bottom or gambrel roofed one and a half story house, more popular on the outer Cape.

While men finished farming and others pulled in whales and still others perhaps returned from coasting voyages to the West Indies, they may have fed the appetites they worked up near on the inn's food. At the colonial tavern after my brig anchored, I might eat a meal in which abundance was considered hospitable; longed for over weeks of hardtack and salt pork and cod. There might be a special dinner of pickled Monomoy clams, smoked shad and salmon, followed by wild duck; the smoked wildfowl having turned over an open hearth to roast it, then garnished with cranberry. I might then have eaten some roast marinade of venison. Each dish might have been taken with homemade pumpkin bread and succotash, washed down with homemade cider or ale. Indian pudding, made of cornmeal and West Indian molasses and local milk, steaming hot, covered in fresh cream, might follow as dessert.

(People at home on their farms ate more simply of many gifts of the coastal grasslands, seas, skies and flats: salt fish, brown bread, herbs, roots, salt beef and pork with fresh fish, and a rare, once a month dish of fresh meat either wild or domesticated. There might be wild fowl in fall and winter, shellfish throughout the year as the flats allowed, Indian pudding, pork baked with beans. Supper is often like breakfast only with additional cheese, gingerbread, fruit pies of various sorts: wild blackberries, strawberries, beach plums, the newly cultivated apples.)

Dried apples, pickled mackerel, pickled pork, fresh corn, fresh baked bread, fresh churned butter, fresh mutton; smoked oysters, home-brewed ale. Food: dried, salted, pickled, smoked, freshly picked and plucked; tallow candles dripping. Good food, moderate weather, blossoming honeysuckles, a good bed, companionship – enough. What more then, could I need?

It is likely the inn not only served food and bedded down travelers, but was a pilotage, complete with beacon fires and small vessels to guide ships around Monomoy's terrible shoals. We know that here "a place of relief had been given to many ship wracked at Sandi Point alias Rack Cove." Unfortunately, only one episode was recorded. In 1729, the immigrant ship "George and Ann" sailed out of Ireland with a larcenous Captain Rymer,

who, it appeared, decided to starve his passengers into letting him keep their belongings in ransom for food. Near Sandy Point, they summoned a passing packet ship even as they threatened to throw Rymer overboard. Captain Lothrop of the brig packet put the passengers into the Wreck Cove Stewart tavern to recuperate. He described the passengers as looking "very ghastfully. They craved hard for water, of which one drank to that degree that he soon after died." (Lothrop in Otis's *Genealogical Notes of Barnstable Families* reports this.)

The place served for wayfarers, for fishermen, ships in passage, the shipwrecked, for men talking politics, in short, for anyone who could gallop or shallop out depending on the state of the tidal flats at the time. One wonders to what pirates, what pirate-fighters, what English wrecked by French, what French moon-cussed by English, Stewart catered. Indeed, the place may have been a water-warrior headquarters. Captain Cyprian Southack, spying and mapping for almost 30 years – until 1733, was in the employ of the Royal Government and commissioned by the colonial governors. He who mapped Webb's/Monomoy chased down French privateers in his specially equipped sloop whaler, scouting all the way to Canada, one would imagine, stopped at Wreck Cove to anchor, to hear over the clank of ale mugs, the conversation at Stewart's Tavern from which he might pick up the latest leads on the Whidah loot, or the newest tidbits about French who haunted English waters.

Notably, later, free of England, Americans followed the same idea of doing a service with your tavern. Even to Thoreau's time, the public house was the duty of the town; it was expected that where no "hotel" existed to serve wayfarers, bed and board would be provided. (J.B. Smith, in Three Centuries of Barnstable County.)

1745, The Tavern Is Closed

Taverns were, of course, as said, seats of political ferment, whether Whig or Tory, from the 1760s, through the Revolution. But Monomoy ale politics were to miss these years. A year before Stewart left Monomoy, in 1744, began King George's War. (See chapter 10.)

Joseph Stewart, the tavern owner, and his family, managed to stay with the island until 1745, but no longer. It must have been too uncomfortable, too unsafe in those times to continue to keep open. (Yet, the Stewart name adorned maps as Stewart's Knoll where the house was, as Stewart's Passage where a break occasionally occurred, and as Stewart's Bend, a curve of cove on the southeast side, used until the 1800s, and was mentioned on maps as late as 1862.)

9

The Land's Riches Lead To Disputes:
Land Claims

By 1711, in spite of the Quason Purchase, Will Nickerson's heirs in partnership with various Covells, were claiming Manomoit Great Beach by usufruct. Additional tracts up through Muddy Cove and Pleasant Bay had been deeded to Will, apparently for cash payments, by John Quason. (Sachem John's son, Josephus would also deed out lands to Nickerson heirs.) Another group of men comprised of various Doanes, Hopkinses, Snows and Coles claimed the Great Beach as "Old Comers" under the first Plimoth Patent ceded by the Plymouth General Court in a 1652 royal land grant approved by the Crown. This patent had claimed a large area of the Cape as a reserve for "First Comer" progeny. These men also thought they had been deeded the land in 1711 by the three daughters and four sons of John Quason. A third group claimed to have been the first to have bought "sedge and meadow" of the Quason family. Elisha Hedge and his partners, Mr. David Melvel and Mr. Hugh Stuart and Mr. Samuel Smith, thought they had owned the Monomoy Great Beach since 1694.

Shortly after establishing his inn, probably by 1715, William Eldridge sold out to a Morris Farris, who in turn sold to Joseph Stewart by 1725. Whether or not Farris had actually run the place as an inn or used it as his home, providing some bed and board for a decade, we do not know. Farris would put his new house on the upland of Quitnessett ("at the little island"). It would come to be known as Morris (Morris's) Island.

Perhaps Hedge and Farris sold out to Stewart because Monomoy meant braving not only the elements, the complex ins and outs of its geology and tidal flats, the piratical intrigue and world politics of the times, but the petty local squabbles over its ownership.

In 1715 Elisha Hedge still pastured his "kine" on Monomoy as he had since before the century's turn. Pasture was used in common, as well as privately. Some of the land disputes over Monomoy Great beach had to do with which part belonged to the town and its hired herder, which to private

men, and to what use by the common or the individual might the place be put. In 1715 there were more complaints, now by the English settlers, that common cattle were eating private crops. Elisha Hedge proclaimed that, "they did in the year 1694 purchase of the Indians John Quason and Josephus Quason of Monomoy alias Chatham in the County of Barnstable a certain Beach commonly called Monomoy Beach lying Eastward of sd Monomoy with severall parcels of meadow or sedge ground lying adjacent thereunto as may be seen by an instrument of conveyance under the hands of John and Josephus Quason, wh said Meadow and Beach was never as they can learn by the General Court granted to any Persons whatsoever and therefore they thought they might with safety purchase the same. It being no way to the Prejudice of the said Indians to sell a Beach which was no way likely to be profitable to them, that the said Purchase was made before any law of this Province was made to the contrary, that they have for many years quietly enjoyed & possessed the said beach with its appurtenances & have since sold and made conveyances of a considerable Part of sd Beach to other Persons who have quietly possessed & improved the same without any manifest dislike to the Indians, yet notwithstanding some English do trespass upon the said Beach by turning over Horses & Cattle to graze thereon & they also mollest and disturb the persons to whom it was sold, Wherby great Inconvenience & damage is like to ensue." To add insult to injury, the Old Comers kept selling out pieces from under Hedge's nose. Everybody ended up in court, only to have their cases thrown out in 1715.

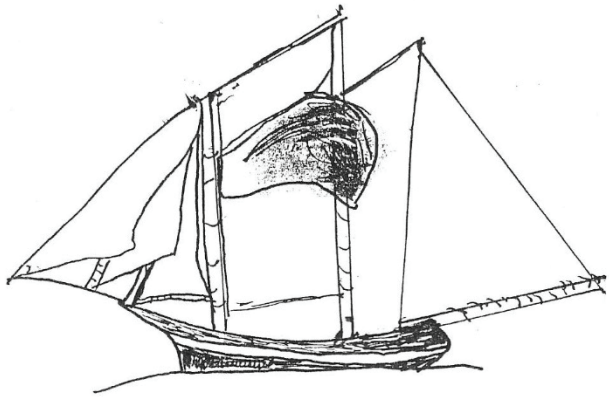
In 1729 a few more hearty souls lived there, farming their cattle and hogs. The argument over the piece of land from Sandy Point (then, likely nearer to Inward Point and Morris Island, than the southernmost tip of the place, see Chapter 4) to Potanamaquut Harbor at the northernmost top, continued. The Nickerson and Covell group contended, as they had in 1715, that the place was theirs, having fed and cut the grasses and "erbig" on "said beach" since 1694. Though in 1729 lots were drawn to satisfy the three groups of claimants, Hedge, the Old Comers, the Nickersons, the beach ended up being divided, along with Webb's Island meadow, into three lots to be subdivided; but apparently the division was never legalized.

In 1733 the town of Chatham banned common pasture. Stewart, the innkeeper, was given land. "The said proprietors vote that said beach meadows and sedge ground shall be kept and orderly improved by and for mowing and no other use...no Creatures such as neat cattle, horses, hogs and sheep shall be allowed to go at large on any part of said beach...except Mr. Joseph Stuart for so long as he himself shall keep Entertainment at said Beach to be allowed to keep two horses and two cows for his family's support." (There is some possibility that Stewart was by now on his second

wife, having adopted her offspring; that she may have been Farris's widow.)

By 1738 more lands were divvied up to resolve the 1729 conflict: "Monemy Great Beach," from "Sandy Point east and north to Potanamacut Harbor," together with salt meadow and sedge including the marsh "northward of a place called Webb's Island" was divided; Webb's into three pieces and all above it into six, apparently temporarily satisfying the three groups of claimants. On May 28, 1746, parts of the salt marsh not already divided were laid out. Disputes quieted between 1756 and 1783, according to Chatham Historical Society records.

After the 1763 Treaty of Paris none returned to Monomoy, it seems. During the long tavernless and houseless time, when pasture and mowing claims remained dormant, we were undoubtedly too busy fending off first the French and afterwards the British, to tend to our farming as a commodity venture as carefully; just concentrating on survival and subsistence, instead. Because of the danger brought on by the politics of the time many would not fish, other than for subsistence, with consistency. Illness, influenza, killer sore throats, also hit Chatham from the 1740s to the 1760s, taking the lives of whites, Indians and black slaves, alike. Enemies and outlaws may have bivouacked on an innless peninsula without contention. It is reported that pirates left treasure buried in the clay under the location of the old Chatham light house way before it was built in one of the very areas where Monomoy had been attached to the land off and on during the times of piracy and intrigue, one of the areas through which the furtive may have sailed.



10

War: The Worlds of Fish and Fur Fought Over

From 1690, well into the 18th century, war was the norm.

The area of conflict in which Monomoy and the Cape at large was involved more predominantly was the far north. England and France sent men to die in battles over the riches which cod, whales and most importantly beaver and otter fur trade produced. These wars took Chatham (and Cape) men off to New York state and Canada on and off for more than 50 years, making soldiers out of fisher-farmers. Fathers and then sons and even grandsons went to fight both on land and on the waters.

From 1690 to 1697 there was King William's War flaring up in part because the French incited Huron allies to massacre some New York settlers who had bilked them. Then from 1702 to 1713 Queen Anne's war was waged, much of it over English and French trading posts from Canada to New England, west to the Mississippi River, the Upper Missouri, south to the Gulf Coast. Overseas, the English won certain trading rights from the Spanish to trade slaves in their pieces of North and South America.

A year before Stewart left Monomoy, in 1744, began King George's War (1744–1748). Fort Louisbourg and its new lighthouse on the Isle of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, built in 1740 as one of the very first on the continent, was taken in 1745 by a sea assault of the Gorham's Rangers from their whaleboats, combined with a land attack staged by horses slogging through mud, carrying canon and soldiers. King George's War – part of yet another European war (that of the War of the Austrian Succession considered by some to be one of the French and Indian Wars) – also embroiled New England and Nova Scotia against the French.

(In 1754 an expedition at the beginning of the Seven Years War found a refortified Fort Louisbourg at the important commercial port of Cape Breton; the English had returned the land they had won to the French by the treaty for the end of King George's War, in return for concessions near the Gulf of Mexico on the Mississippi River. Everybody battling to dominate land which was not theirs in the first place.)

Clashes continued on this continent between the British and French,

and in Europe. The Seven Years War also called the French and Indian War (1754-1763) secured much of the region of Canada in which the English Hudson Bay fur posts flourished, which had stolen from the French much of the trade in pelts they had previously established by the time war ended with the 1763 Treaty of Paris.

Gorham's Rangers

Cape Codders, white and red alike, were involved with all these wars. Many local Indians had accompanied English to the second battle of Cape Breton, when Louisbourg was retaken, in 1758 and in 1755 many had participated in the big battle at Crown Point, New York. Indeed, Wampanoag men were involved in all the wars which together comprise the French and Indian conflicts.

In 1722, for instance, a campaign took place during an unofficial part of the wars under the famed Major Josiah Winslow of King Philip's War and a Captain Westbrook, in which Monomoyicks fought at the St. George's river, where, although most of a large mixed regiment died, 4 of these Indians fought off 20 opponents belonging to Iroquoian tribes of the north who had been traditional Algonquian enemies. They returned alive but wounded to Monomoy township.

Whaleboat fleets let down from transport vessels were crucial from 1690 on in taking men closer to the action of northern wars. They came from various sources. One was Sir William Phips' early naval boat inventions. He was a New England state governor and a well-known eccentric who, wonderfully, freed many witches out from the clutches of the Mather family's indictments. Two of the other stimuli came from the flat-bottomed, two-prowed batteaux of the French "voyageurs."

From 1744 on, whale boats (invented and supplied by the John Gorham family of Barnstable and Yarmouth), themselves outgrowths of British wherries and Indian canoes, were used by the infamous Gorham's Rangers.

Many of the men on the whaleboats were Wampanoag men who had hired out or been indentured to the Gorham family as whalers. Commanded by Lt. Col. John Gorham III from 1744 to his death by smallpox in 1751 when his brother captain Joseph Gorham took over, Gorham's Rangers were largely manned by Cape Indians. In his monograph "Savages in the Service of Empire" Brian Carroll writes, "The vast majority, about fifty-five, were Nauset and Wampanoag Indians from Cape Cod (Barnstable County)… Their grandfather, John Gorham II, led English and Wampanoag troops during King William's War…The fifty to sixty Wampanoag and Nauset men initially recruited for the company in 1744 comprised over half of the able-bodied Indian men in Barnstable County. The small population clusters at

Mattakeesett ('Indiantown' in Yarmouth), Potanomacut (in Harwich), and Nauset (in Eastham) were devastated by the wartime casualties." (Note that Potanomacut was actually in what is now Orleans.) Some natives hired out, some were indentured, often to pay off debts, some may have been enslaved (as Wampanoag were sold into slavery in the Caribbean and Tangiers after King Philip's war). Names were such as Jacob Chammock, Philip Will, Caleb Popmonet, and Isaac Peck, corporal Jeremiah Queach of Harwich, Joseph Ralph as well as the Nauset, Peter Dogamus. (For a discussion of enslavement and indenture amongst native whaling men in Brewster see Gunning and Roscoe, Brewster Historical Society Bulletin, "Between the Black and the White," Feb. 2022; for an intensive view by collective scholars via Brown University https://indigenousslavery.org/ Notably some Wampanoag whalemen went on to become independent captains of whaleships whence they accumulated wealth and prestige.)

Using the rowed vessels off loaded from larger ships to carry ten or twelve men apiece, the Rangers attacked coastal towns from sea to coast and traveled into inlets, bays and on into rivers, where these Native whalemen and warriors' skill at fighting in forested areas was paramount.

Pirates and Privateers

While war on land continued – on the waters, not only an infiltrating small navy of whaleboats fought but pirates and privateers, French, Spanish, British, some without government, lawless, many sanctioned by their governments, took vessels. Privateering on behalf of governments, carried on in between full-fledged bellicose engagements of nations, often helped to create the very trouble which led to those wars. One such incident during this epoch of international conflicts used as an excuse for "The War for Jenkin's Ear," part of the King George's War, involved the cutting off an English naval officer's ear by government backed Spanish Caribbean "pirates."

Privateering was hard to tell from piracy. Given a "letter of marque" by your own country encouraging you to covertly perform small wars against hostile countries, that was privateering. The unlicensed practice of taking enemy ships – that was considered piracy, as was the taking of your own country's vessels (the practice over which Black Bellamy's partner in the infamous Whidah split with him). Privateering, unlike piracy, was for gentlemen. Englishmen used honorable men like Captain Kidd to chase illicit pirates in the West Indies, then set him up for a hanging while taking control of the loot, in the name of the law.

Boats spawned in the late 1600s as a response to Caribbean piracy, such as fast Jamaican sloops, or "brigand" (bandit, brigantine) boats, half

square rigged, half lateen set for swiftness, harassed us in our waters. In 1711 one French privateer gave chase to many vessels. Lurking off the elbow near Monomoy, it so bothered inhabitants that they gave this as a major reason for wanting to incorporate all of "Monemoy, including all the islands, beach, sedge and marsh" into a town so they could more readily defend themselves. In 1699 they had petitioned to incorporate but this did not happen until June 11,1712. From 1712 to 1733, French privateers were given as an excuse not to send men away to war who were needed to defend local houses. The Cape had a few men like Barnstable's Silver John who, during this era, made a fortune privateering.

11

Mooncussers and Privateers as Revolutionaries

The upheavals of weather and geology may have been a factor in what would become a 30-year absence of humans in habitation on Monomoy. As Chapter 1 discusses in detail, near to and well after 1745, the island supported a number of changes, cracking apart at channels, gluing back on. By the 1750s a passage had fissioned through from the now Old Harbor to Stage Harbor. Although the cuts began to heal, scarring up nicely by the Revolution, the changes may have sloshed invading waters of sea and storm over the slender lands, blown out its dunes over and again, making it uncomfortably exposed.

Or perchance, something else was happening on Monomoy during the gap in the record from the time the Stewarts left the island to the time after the Revolution when Monomoy again hosted a pilotage. Another kind of privateering developed in the colonial period: the land piracy of the mooncussers (moon cursers). These practiced their arts up and down the coast, off of barrier islands from here to Cape Hatteras and beyond.

The derivation of the term itself is unclear. Either it was that they who are lured to destruction by these false moons curse the absence of the real one by which they could navigate, or it was that the evildoers cursed the appearing moon because sailors could "see the shoals and avoid the trap." One thing is sure, mooncussers used nature against man; they lured ships to death by setting up "lanthorns" onshore which provided false beacons to ships either distressed by storms or trying to navigate those sinewy strands of shallow sand bars which could knot them in, strangle them with drowning waters. (Not only the moon but the Big Dipper and North Star were used for night steering before modern instruments proliferated in the 1760s. When they were obscured, it could mean big trouble.) As late as 1857, Thoreau speaks of captains who cursed the lone fisherman's lights for confusing them into running aground. If even legitimate lights onshore or on beacon ships could confuse ships navigating almost blind in mists, freak blizzards or hurricanes, well set lure-lights could prove almost certain to misguide a vessel. Tricks of fog and light fool sailors, deceive them into

misjudging distances. *The storms of the Cape will thrust out of their labor creaking, popping, bursting vessels; a clan of dead bodies, a host of treasures.*

From 1673 to 1717 as folklorist Botkin records, carrying torches of tow and pitch: "Link boys would light you into a pack of rogues." Historically the mooncussers practiced from the 1600s to the War of 1812. Many writers have sought to deny that Cape Codders ever mooncussed. But they certainly knew about it. When Cyprian Southack took his boat down Jeremy's Gutter to plunder the gold from the Whidah wreck, and thereafter started to obsessively violate rights by entering anyone's house to find the loot of Black Bellamy, who had perished in the wreck, they angrily called him "the greatest Mooncurser." Bellamy himself was wrecked in 1717 by the captain of a snow who used mooncusser techniques: he threw a lighted tar-barrel into the water in the pretense of guiding the black ship out of Provincetown in poor weather; instead, deliberately guiding her to break up on Wellfleet's devastating backside shoals.

If you didn't want to drudge at hoeing the land, dare the death which whaling could bring, fish for cod, trap or trade for furs, be a soldier in the north, trade hogs, hides, tobacco, corn, cod, molasses, rum, dyes, or even slaves from coasters to the south and the Caribbean, you could practice this glamorous, deadly pursuit. As with the other piracies, there were two reasons to do it: one was the wealth which the vessels could yield, two was for patriotic purposes. (For a tale of mooncussing listen to The Mooncusser's Tale: The Mooncusser's Tale by Lee Roscoe on PRX)

If the arts of mooncussing were used at the height of piracy, they could also be used against privateers. Chathamites certainly had reason to mooncuss, to retaliate against depredating vessels. Pirates and French privateers had been in the waters, as we have mentioned, from the 1690s on, with a climax around Monomoy from 1711 through the 1730s. During and between the wars in Canada, the plunder by the French of our whaling sloops in the Gulf of Maine and by the Spanish of our coasters to the West Indies and in the Gulf of Mexico reached an all-time high. From the late 1740s through the 1760s, incident after incident took place, so much so that many Cape vessels stopped going north for whales and cod. They would have a new reason as well.

Revolution

The salt farmers farmed, they fished. They had whaled for offshore right whales, venturing after sperm whales as well. They sailed north for fur. They warred as soldiers, as naval men, against the north. They acquired wealth off the land and the sea. The Cape had, in spite of all, produced a surplus of cows and corn, of fish. It had traded across the bay and down to the south, to Europe and the West Indies and Africa. Sperm oil had made fortunes for

Truro and Barnstable men.

After the fur wars ended, England had spent so much money on them that they were a pyrrhic victory. The wealth created by the goods of the land, the wealth of the seas in whales and cod, and the taxes levied on that wealth helped to create a rebellion. England robbed her colonies by excessively taxing their profits, not by an income tax, but by placing restrictive duties on everything from printer's ink to whale oil. Profits were eaten up paying the revenue collector. England saddled the colonists with Kafkaesque lawcourts, and unwarranted search and seizure. No sooner did the Cape Codders, both settlers and Indians, feel their oats as victorious soldiers, then the mother country began to send in her brass-postured, red coated soldiers to oversee her new taxes, both quartering them here and allowing them unlawful entry to New England houses by 1766, only three years after the Treaty of Paris had been signed with the French. (In the same year of 1766, a smallpox epidemic hit Chatham. Perhaps some people could have been quarantined on Monomoy in temporary hospitals as they were in other places on the Cape. The record is silent.) Thus, the new wealth, the sense of autonomy created in soldiers fighting in Canada, the resentment of having warred for a distant land which now taxed the New Englanders to recoup the drain on her royal treasury from those fur battles created a wish for independence from the saddle of England, even as Cape Codders set themselves to acquire the niceties of their oppressors.

The British Revenue Service and its Navy since 1690 had chased the French and had operated against pirates. In 1763 British Customs took over the job, at the same time turning its skills against the Americans to collect the punitive duties. After 1763 the Americans could turn their newfound naval skills, their war brigs, secret shallops set out with telescopes, quadrants and so forth, against the British.

Chatham in 1774/5 had voted for the embargo of imported teas which were so heavily taxed by the Brits. But the town voted against the Declaration of Independence. Albeit, when war actually started, it sided with the rebels. As one in five men had already warred, now supporting the new War for Independence was a mixed blessing for it meant leaving the elbow vulnerable as before to, if not pirates, the many-gunned British frigates. In 1775 it was ordered that the town of Chatham "secrete" the boats, especially the whalers, as they prepared for war.

Secret or not, the British blockaded the Cape so successfully that ships in Chatham, Truro, and Wellfleet, literally rotted in the harbors. From Chatham's 30 vessels (and some 200 fishermen) at the war's start, the end showed four or five. Those ships which "ventured out were captured and the crews thrown into prison ships. Of sorrowing mothers and lonely widows,

the town was full." The land turned to subsistence farming, to fowl and shorebird hunting and offshore and freshwater fishing to survive. Foregoing the newly acquired taste for genteel foreign luxuries in favor of Spartan self-reliance, once again sheep created homespun; tallow and bayberries made candles; rendered washashore whales made Betty lamp light.

Did Monomoy Mooncuss?

It would not necessarily have been deemed a bad thing to lure a French or Spanish vessel ashore. And after those conflicts, during the tyranny before the Revolt and certainly during the war, it would have been considered heroic. With privateers occasionally scarce, with British harassing the Americans, wrecking their ships would be patriotic. The skills they had perhaps used against French and Spanish boats might be turned on the mother country. Monomoy would have been ideal for wrecking enemy ships to protect our interests. Her terrible rips trapped and challenged vessels; she was situated perfectly for the passage of virtually all ships going north and south. Perhaps the record is silent regarding Monomoy after the Stewart Tavern because its harbors were just too vulnerable to every kind of depredation. Perhaps for just this reason, Monomoiers would gain their rep for illicit doings.

Jeremiah's Gutter

Until those geological changes mentioned above closed watery fissures by the 1770s, Monomoy would have been a perfect place for covert sails. In the first half of the 18th century, the inn at Wreck Cove was likely near a cut through which went from Wreck Cove and Stage Harbor into the Great Harbor of Chatham and Pleasant Bay which was Stewart's Passage. On maps of the early 1700s, Boat Meadow Creek sliced the Cape into an island from Eastham to Provincetown. Named "Jeremy's Drean" (drain) the "gutter" would provide a passage from Massachusetts Bay on the north of the Cape, to the Atlantic at her east, which cut through South Orleans. The gutter led directly to Monomoy and had often been used by Southack. One could've sailed through the drain and on down through the Stewart's passage into Wreck Cove and Stage Harbor. Here was a covert route on the inside of Monomoy, to Webb's, where on arrival, you could do your deeds of hiding boats so that until the late second half of the 18th century Monomoiers could harass British and other ships with fair ease.

The three big islands of early 18th century Cape, dividing Barnstable from Monemy (Chatham) from Eastham (Nauset) would seal by the late 18th century around the time of the Revolution. A tidal wave of the 1760s resulted in silt which closed the gutter as well as the Stewart passage by the 1770s. The Old Harbor was, in the late 18th century, mapped as north of Monomoy right where we know southern Pleasant Bay. It would have

been fought over by colonials and the British. If British ships held any of the harbors around the place, it would take great daring and skill to sneak down to the tip of Monomoy by horse or on foot to set your lure lights. Another danger was that of British soldiers and naval men sent to keep down civil rebellion who may have landed at the tip of Sandy Point by yawl from a frigate or other ship, to take fresh water, grab off stray sheep or cattle for food, maybe camping here, happy to get off their cramped ships. When the Brits were not bivouacked there from the 1770s, through the Revolt (if they were), citizens could have harried British ships from distant points on Monomoy, sailing out from Chatham, across Stage Harbor, in dim nights when moored British frigates could not see us.

There are little but the tattered fragments of an oral tradition to support the Monomoy doings, for the storied depiction of former events is now lost and written documentation of incidents in the historic record are virtually non-existent. On the Cape a few odd wrecks were reported as happening throughout the War for Independence: A ship which crashed near Wellfleet, spreading its English cargo of tea around the time of the Boston Tea Party, may have wrecked not entirely of natural fate. The famous wreck of the English warship Somerset on the Provincetown bars may have been manufactured by Capers.

One long-standing legend, oft told in books, has it that during the Revolutionary War one man broke from tradition to place his mooncusser lights not on terra firma, but on the back of a Monomoy mare. When she galloped around the dunes, she looked like a boat rocking at sea and ships would come in too close while following her lead, only to be run aground. This dame horse, evil-tempered from eating a clergyman's pasture grass (ingesting the spirits of the damned around the place?), threw its wrecker-rider one night, after which there appeared a white riderless ghost-horse galloping about on Monomoy and across Stage Harbor all through the 1800s and on into the early 1900s, presaging wrecks. *I can imagine myself in one of Stage Harbor's snug, ship-like, low-ceilinged, seafarmhouse's berths, seeing of a windy night a white figure on a white horse under a white owl's moon, galloping towards ocean and across the inlets to Monomoy.*

Privateers Again

Lacking naval power until in 1780 the French helped the Americans to finance and build naval ships with organized plans of attack under heroes like John Paul Jones (a man of a strangely checkered past), the locals had to rely on privateers with brigantines, schooners, sloops to fight ships and frigates. Men like a then-famed Captain John Manley took many prizes from around Boston and Martha's Vineyard. From Chatham itself such ships as the

"American Revenue Privateer" under Captain Samuel Champlin, took into harbors perhaps such as Stage Harbor or Old Harbor, British men of war frigates and bomb brigs, as we began to loosen the British hold on our shores.

One known skirmish between the British and the colonists took place at the Old Harbor, well northeast of the old Stewart Tavern's knoll, below the Potanamacut head of the isle. On June 20th, 1782, after the war had ended, the brigantine "Joseph" captained and owned by one Peter Wells, seized a Chatham sloop, schooner and brigantine, raising the Union Jack over them. Richard Sears, the Squire (who would later oversee the first Humane Hut) with members of the local militia kept up fire at Wells, who returned with canon. One of the prizes ran aground and the locals retook her, piloting her to shore. Wells' privateer brigantine was boarded by Brits fleeing the grounded prize. The "Joseph" abandoned the other two prizes and sailed off, but Monomoy men warned Connecticut coasters nearby of the rogue vessel still at large. The captain of the militia, a Doane (from a wealthy outer Cape family), charged the local government for the salvaging of the single recaptured ship. The leader of the counter-fire, Richard Sears, according to William Smith's History of Chatham would wear "long hose, shoes and buckles, ruffled shirts at all times, and his iron-grey hair brushed over and tied with a black ribbon" until he died.

What happened then to our island during the years between 1746, when its use for fodder was disputed, and perhaps only Natives and herders came there – and the late 1700s, when it is mentioned as inhabited again? Was it a pirate haunt, a mooncusser's idyll? Or was it pasture only, supporting the idling horses and sheep, always vulnerable to landing enemies? Did Indians, despite the land deeds, come and go in the deserted years, as they had before the white man came, perhaps to set corn or to hunt for fowl? Or was it a no-man's land, left unto its own damp, mournful winds?

So vivid are the images of the colonial era to me that sometimes I think time has disappeared and I am really living in the past. Perhaps the island's thin wafer in communion with its lymph of sky functions as a living vapor hut in which the visions of history and the spirits of nature are conveyed, a gift of the Snowy Owl king shaman. Perhaps his vision of history is trying to become mine, as creatures merge into one another's consciousness, feeling the limits of one another's skins.

Perhaps dream is experience and experience dream and dream is "reality", even as some ancients and tribesmen believe.

Hovering over me is raw grey cold. Fog wraiths lift over the flats and heath. Salt hay finally turned green (after a longer winter than the mainland's) is

beneath me. I bend my back in to scythe it, gather in enough to dry for my sheep, even before the harvest, for extra fodder, even though I might pasture them right here in the black grass beyond the pond and thicket. Now I have some ewes birthing and need some hay for them. My little brother and I load the hay onto a work horse more like a pet, a family member, than animal. (We were lucky to have the knobby beast with his special shoes for the marsh; mostly oxen did the heavy chores, plowing, pulling, carting.)

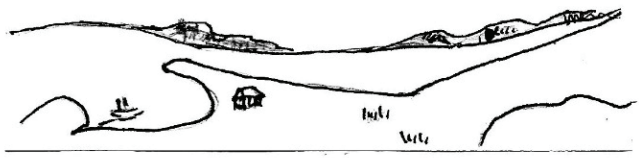
In the green swampy, fishy, rank, salt of a vapor, near the clotted algae of a tidal panne, my fingers shear the sheep, card the wool. My feet and hands turn a fine line of the cloud out of a spinner's wheel. The ceiling is low, the oak beams hand-hewn and large. I have some of our home-grown, fresh mutton in the kettle on a hearth. That kettle was rough forged by a local blacksmith out of bog iron extracted from the white cedar swamp onshore; the iron for his forge made red hot with charcoal from the pines.

With low woods and thickets on the isle, we gather some firewood, though we often brought much of our winter cordwood on barges from the shore.

As the fire burns, sharp breaks of lightning hinge odd doors in the skies. I see a shallop, a lugger, some hundreds of yards down in the harbor on this northwest part of the peninsula; wonder if there is any less savory ship moored down island at Wreck Point inside Stewart's Bend.

In walks a man with a determined look on his face; leaving the back side of the huge hearth where I am spinning near the fire which faces the pantry sheds – next to the assortment of barrels where we keep our winter supplies; where the slanted northern roof covers this stored flour and potatoes, I greet him. Lead him to the tables where he will be fed. He has on one of the new beaver felt tricorns, taking over from the round crowned brimmed hat and the bicorns of a more puritanical era. With ruffled gentlemen's cuffs, I see he is a sailor, indeed a captain, a gentleman, not wrapped in homespun like a common farmer or mariner, nor indeed, like myself long waisted and slightly swelling over hippy petticoats. From out his long waistcoat his hands move. He says he is Southack and asks me if any of Black Bellamy's crews were ever bedded or fed here.

My father is ashore so I cannot find the answer.



12

Monomoyick Mystery

There was talk of an odd kind of grinning fox with a long nose in the colonial era. It was written of by 17th century recounters like Martin Pring, John Josselyn and Thomas Morton. It seems to like lowlands and it wasn't a wolf. This may have been a coyote, then again, maybe a grey fox. Whatever it was, Manamoyicks which knew the shadow, spirit and real shapes of animals and their burrows might have looked out from an enlarged mink cave in the bank of a marsh over a stream and wondered about these new people. Instead of going about like coyote or fox, smiling, from the mouth of each burrow to each hole in the ground, from grass hummock to the hill ridge, these men were more like the meadow mouse, to rummage around in the grasses, or to set their livestock there. They were like the white stomached mouse, looking out from their step down half cellars where they cached their apples and onions on dried saltmarsh hay nests. These must be a fearful race to stay in one place, to accumulate it, and use it up. Not like a furred man to come out of a burrow and wander with the seasons – upland to the deer, down to the fish – but like mouse, to step into their pits and look out.

A Drift Off

The sensate direct experience of feeling the winds off the wings of open dunes disappears from the gull-high flesh of the sands into the exaltation of the flustered seas and the might of their space, into the drama of the fox-fur pines beyond the yellow and blue greens of sheltering Cape woodlands; the proprietary interest in these places, the link they offered to a personal life, its collected and collective imagery, we would see change. No more would the women curve the willow saplings into the ground, cover them with woven grasses. No more would they sleep in these temporary camps as they collected bullrush and cattail at the clear end of high summer, working next to winding streams as far as the eye could see, inhaling wetlands filled with green spathes, tanned drooping nutlets of sedges, spiked flowers of purple hardhack and yellow primrose, coated with

a sweet sun. Beyond the mounded hillocks of lead-green trees, tucked into the Cape's short and dense winter-dark pines (not as filled with the shade of sorrow and blue as places in colder areas), the shining, sharp-speaking oaks waited. There, the clean and neat Quonset hut longhouses of the village waited for their return. No more the passage from the chill shore and its clam flats to the salt flats and their glittering, cutting grasses, clouded with clogged tufts of green fog, and fish-filled creeks.

From the curved ribs of *wetuash*, to the beams of farms and taverns, to the curved ribs of ship hulls, to the long ruts of wooden plows, a simple confident strength, given by earth in time and space, would be nibbled up by men using up the forest for houses.

A perfect peace would dissolve before the wooden artifacts of history which came to make fields out of forests, to cover the world in grasses in places made flat and ready for the long shadows of lanterns; making monetary transactions of place, of growling forest or slippery grass, often selling the food which could keep them fed in storm or blizzard or drought; leaving themselves bereft for a profit. The hardness that had borne them across the sea, the harder they were, the harsher they made the lands; the harsher they became. A surprising change in attitude and usage. How strange to see the protected places of the sea become places of robbery; the very whales fair game for collection to turn into treasure; the protected places be cut, the eternal balances thrown over for agriculture, hordes of men, eventually hordes of machines. Forests would be cut, farms rise. Houses of wood would create towns. Eventually complex cities would be built. From the flats to the forests, the hidden places would become exposed. The lanes of wandering delight fenced off.

New artifacts which delighted some would change the very process of joy. Though some would adapt graciously to the new, using the best of it, how many would wonder for generations, in their genes, why leave the beauty of private woodland and fast, vast sea for an ugliness to come?

The native and newcomer's world views and their way of activating a life were diametrically opposed. Natural man used the earth to provide for the clan's needs. Land allocated by sachems was done so on a family's clan use basis, let's say of berry lands, subject to change. The idea was to accommodate the people fairly, not to oppress them; not to use parcels of seas, forests, grasses as storerooms in a house of profit.

Relatively mobile fisher/hunter/gatherer/planters stayed in tune with the seasonal limits of the lands. Whether it was fully mobile, moving up and down with the seasons, or more sedentary, Indian life had a fluidity: to provide a peaceful material security, a loving life, a time for dreaming and seeing within the bearings of essentials. The existence they sought, looked

for and created the Beautiful from the environment around them, from its spiritual and physical content, rather than out of its flesh concretized into objects.

Indians lived with the land, with the fun of it, not the intensive labor of it, nor the sport of it; not reserved for royals alone nor for poachers. Civilization is comprised of action and reaction. The poacher reacted against royalty. The English peasant may have had a bit of tribesman still left in him. There were those competent men, sure of their bodies' worth, who scavenged in the highlands and lowlands of castle lands. I can see their graceful, lean shadows in the high moated dunes of Monomoy. Like the "escapists" who moved into the wild lands in medieval England in order to opt out of the class system, to have the control over their lives, some of the early arrivals were "wild men" converted to "live Indian," who may well have wished to learn generalism, to make do, to see the spirit within the nature, alive, the freedom which autonomous hands could provide, to learn some of the interior vision which kept the old lifeway going on these shores, even as some of the Indians synthesized some of the new implements and new beliefs with the old.

If the Indian lived a kind of liquid internalized sight combined with externalized artistry, generalism, a life as art – for the most part the newcomer would live with art sifted out from life, would live in farmland or with the sea's wide romance and moods, cast out from the Native's internal worlds, perhaps longing to return to them, to the natural elements within a simpler context from which he, like all people, originally had sprung, but unable to because of the societal structure around him. Unable to because the material structure could not undo itself; it could only go forward. Not wanting to, because here each man could aspire to have what those against whom one had reacted, the aristocrats, or at least one's so-called "betters" back across the sea had acquired.

Here on Monomoy, on coastal Cape Cod, they could use the cutting of trees, the pasturing of livestock, the growing of crops, the reaping of whales, the wrecking of ships, the fishing of waters, the sailing of seas as a means by which they could ascend.

For the most part, the newcomers may have been autonomous in their self-providing ways for a time, living with the land grudgingly, but many came here angry at the past; divorced from the dual spirit and flesh of a natural life, from their own ancient tribal visions. Losing connection with the spiritual power of the natural world, even the most self-sufficient were often pragmatists. Needing to lock up the land and sea into treasure, a storehouse of practical, money-making commodities, they were not by choice (although they were by necessity of action often) versatile

generalists with adaptable hands and many skills, living lightly within a spirit of the earth, making, let us say, traditional eel spears and clam hoes from European metal kettles – but specialists, staying in one place, developing many, many, singular talents to be practiced by a man apiece, fragmenting out specialties like pieces of a prism.

The difference between the two was almost as if the tribal men were poets, living with the lure of speech, and the new men were painters, having to materialize their experiences in externals. The evolution of these two ways of internal view manifested by external acts was a long cultural/biological process, the psychological contorted by the ecological. What had pushed the newcomers to externalize their reality through material inventiveness? Perhaps it was an agrarian Old World culture limited in its available land, forced by war into specialisms; a culture which had suffered a loss of face by conquests, a loss of face soothed by material manifestations of power. The strictures of it had arisen out of the ribs of civilization itself; been passed on from Mesopotamia to Rome to Northern Europe. Its requirements had frozen nomadic men into rebellious peasants and towering aristocrats; its past created its special motivating forces in the present.

Thus, whilst Indians lived with the land, and some of both worlds looked for synthesis, balance, fusion of the lifeways, colonists for the most part, lived against it. Lived to exploit it. In spite of those few "wild men," most did not learn from the Natives how to live, past the knowledge they took at the outset to let them survive; instead, they superimposed their burgher and yeoman economic traditions on the area; reacting with a Biblically adversarial stance to the world outside their houses and churches.

Yet here the area shaped them as well, if not to New World indigenous adaptations, at least to some slight modulations by the new land. Still clinging to their homeland's agricultural definitions, they did somewhat combine the techniques of the new with the old, learning what complemented their preconceptions from the generous inhabitants. For instance, wattle and daub early houses were not only Tudor but could be adapted from Indian homes; a wigwam shape for temporary shelter. The Scots smoked herring over seaweed with various woods for flavor added; Indians air dried them smoked their fish with hickory smudges. Technical compromises combined techniques of small arts; it was a superficial merger.

For the invaded, that interior mystery, liquefaction of life into a kind of internal light, this energy was kept for some, while some synthesized new technology and lifeways (via versatile hands) with old, even as some lost their spiritual flow to Christianity. Their generalists' fluidity adapted itself to the newcomers' offerings, trying to take the best while preserving, for

some, the idea of living for life, keeping delight. Apparently, some of the Indians managed to maintain some of their traditional material ways, never losing their woodsmanship, their competence in food gathering, while taking on some of the new activities or technologies the invaders introduced, adapting them to a use in balance with a community which continued to be more interested in a gracious, kind, secure, cooperative existence than in base selfish specialism and material pursuits.

Once established, one auto-sufficient, self-sustaining, independent way competed with another: settled agrarianism with moderately nomadic hunting, fishing, gathering and horticulture. Soon, the commoditizing of produce not for subsistence but for sale would alter everyone's life, including those who had dwelt here for so many, many generations before the newcomers. The economies of trade would replace those of a colonial agrarian or a tribal hunting independence. Specialism would follow on the heels of the use of the rooms of nature for profit, in the guise of the sale of some singular professional talent, rather than the use in seasons of the physical and mental competences of multi-skilled generalists we once had been. All would change (here on the island) from planters to soldiers to traders to sellers, from fishers for provision of the families, to fishers for currency, from soldiers to lifesavers to wardens. Everyone (for better or worse) would be hooked into the precariousness of an economy based on buying and selling something. The niches of the land, marsh, sea, flats, forest would be compartments in a storehouse of use and sale. The long rhythm and space of the land's body would change save for those few who kept within a key to the past, who sought the land and the sea in their rare and still mysteries, in spite of themselves, in spite of the coming comforts of Progress.

Peace

Despite the bad actions of early captains such as Champlain, amazingly Indians at Chatham had kept peace with arriving Europeans, remaining friends with the traders to Port Fortune from Plymouth. Some tolerant good humor, combined with a canny sense of the possibilities of some of the goods the arrivals had to offer – better to trade than raid – kept men, already secure in their strength and abilities, from a fearful and violent reaction to invaders. And while there were those who suggested pushing the English back into the sea, they were restrained ultimately by their own leaders, a consensus amongst the people. Miles Standish's 1623 war on some of those Indian insurgents, however, would be a fiasco, causing many Cape leaders and their bands to disappear into the swamps, abandon planting, die of starvation, succumb to illness which had already taken

many of the population from Plymouth to western Massachusetts. Still, the leadership of Ousamequin subdued retaliation, and the Pokanokets remained allies of the Cape Cod whites.

The English had come, and at first Monomoyicks and the other tribes, had allowed the "forlorn immigrants," as King Philip named them, land on which to shelter themselves, from which to take sustenance. At first, as we have said, when Squanto and Bradford came to trade, the Monomoyicks hid their belongings and their houses in the woods. Later, they would exchange corn for furs, corn for kettles and hoes, much more willingly, although certain of their leaders, as would those of later tribes, admonished their fellows not to sell out their tried-and-true ways for English hoes or hardtack.

For a while, in the 1630s and 40s, fear of hostilities from Pequots of Connecticut, Narragansetts to the southwest, coupled with the guilt of an invader's usurpation, might well have added a kind of nausea to early immigrant nights; behind the shuttered small lead casement windows of dark, heavy, garrison built, salt box houses. King Philip's War of 1675 did not really affect Chatham real estate, in the terms of the new property collectors; in fact the elbow and the Islands became safe havens, though a number of farmers went out from their small, oil-paper windowed cottages to the war. Monomoiyicks signed, with other tribes of the Cape, a kind of peace treaty prior to King Philip's War. Many local Indians even went off to fight against Philip. The breakaway Cape still under Plimoth's General Court had, all in all, treated Indians moderately more equitably than Winthrop's Massachusetts Bay Colony. Many tribesmen not defeated by disease, the new religion, or by chicanery were killed by the war in 1675. Or were sold into slavery into the West Indies. Philip's war abrogated many of the rest of Indian claims, arbitrarily subjugating natives who survived to colonial law and often oppressive "guardianships."

After the raid on Deerfield, and after 1690, other parts of Massachusetts feared attack from Huron related men possibly descending from the north. But Monomonacks remained peaceable, some in Praying Towns at Potanamacut, Potanumicut, Portanumict, nearby.

Limits of the Land

As Miantonomo, oft-quoted Narragansett leader, said in 1642 to Long Island Indians, "Our fathers had plenty of deer and skins. Our plains were full of deer, as also our woods and of turkies, and our coves full of fish and fowl. But these English having gotten our land, they with scythes cut down the grass, and with axes fell the trees; their cows and horses eat the grass, and their hogs spoil our clam banks and we shall all be starved." Not

only were Indian crops being trampled, but with increased permanent agriculture, deer and wild game was being pushed out of denuded lands. One could no longer move in and out of the forest after the hunt, by the seasons. At least one deeded exchange of Chatham land for steers and a cow would seem to indicate that the economic necessity created by English domesticates pushing out of wild game was a decided factor in forcing Indians to sell land.

Whether they decided to by choice, or if they had to by necessity, participate in the new economy of farmers, of purveyors of goods and services, they could do so by selling some of their land or labor or both; and thus gain the goods, the cattle, the seeds by which they could ostensibly become commodity planters themselves, or at least acquire some of the new enticing "rewards" such as beds, kettles, clothes, liquor. Monomoyicks may have felt they had no choice but to take a kind of tough delight in the changes. Many might have thought there were even advantages to the new English ways. Arts and sciences, which to a horticultural people, might have seemed improvements to be taken on, at first may have made the newcomer's offerings seem useful and even fun. It might have seemed not only kind but wise to let a few of the English stay and in return to adapt their houses to our ways; to stay in one place, moving about less, planting more. As Pokanoket leader and patriot Metacom, known to the English as King Philip, himself said before he found war in 1675 the only way to save his people's lands and ways, the English "knew many sciences which the Indians did not" such as the raising of cattle and fruits.

But as they came in greater numbers, they built houses which sealed up the land. Regardless of the style of abode which housed English colonists, the change was finalized in this age of new English agriculture. Flowing lands dotted with the round replaceable abodes of flexible Indians now were constricted, stopped, made permanent by the immovable shelters of the newcomers. Seasons were now partitioned by fences and legal documents; the curved round lands were made into squares and grids. Before we knew it.

The choices were to adapt, to adopt, to move away, or to war. If Chatham was pushed against the wall topographically, more constricted in its material area for the food quest as we have suggested in a previous chapter, it might more willingly adapt to the new than the Nauset area inhabitants with their roomier ecology and their (perhaps consequently) feistier attitude.

While some might have enjoyed the new lifeway, some may have sorely regretted its entry. In the colonial era, we see low houses, oxen, candlelight, thick trees, heavy vessels, dark seas filled with whales, heavy

wool clothing, cold, huge hearths, wide cart wheels, few roads. After the heavy large woods were cut, the fields cleared, leaner nourishment caused inevitable streamlining; everyone had to go forward: there were no means to return to a continuously camping life.

Goods Gilded by God and Guilt

Chatham originals overrun by the 1690s by foreign animals trampling their corn, as they would be near the mid-1700s by human immigration and procreation, had already decided to learn English ways, to join their churches in small villages of their own. Well before and up to King Philip's War, in fact in the very year the Quasons sold to Nickerson, 1672, Richard Bourne preached to increasing numbers of natives including those at Monomoy. The psychological war of religion increased; guilt was a useful tool. The new religion could explain the losses. (Too, if you cannot retaliate against those who oppress you, the only choice often for one's pride is to embrace with self-deluded pleasure, that with which they oppress you.)

Perhaps the originals thought that if the new material life was better, and that if it were accompanied by a new spiritual manifesto which made it possible, they should adopt it. Perhaps they found in praying villages of now wooden *wetus* – houses half English and half Indian of structure, and of possessions – that to assimilate was to be accepted, while to oppose was to be oppressed. One Monomoyick convert claimed that though her skin was brown, God saw her heart as white. Here was a terrible toll on pride imposed on gentle people by arrogantly sure men who had come, feeling themselves superior to all other men and creatures, pressing that onslaught of aggressive assuredness on all whom they considered "inferior" in godliness or knowledge. For some reason this kind of put down, this kind of psychological oppression is very hard to resist and so, Christianization made locals embarrassed at their "lowly condition." Psychological degradation took its toll on behavior: You could lose heart, do things which would get you into trouble, into debt, while trying to attain the new ways.

Champlain had counted in the Stage Harbor area some 500 to 600 men from Monomoy (Chatham) and possibly Nauset – which included Chatham, Harwich, Billingsgate or Wellfleet, Eastham and Orleans – which might mean 2,400 men, women and children for the area or as author Neal Salisbury suggests as many as 4,500. Richard Bourne mentions that in 1674, 1,000 warriors lived in his bailiwick (Cape Cod) prior to King Philip's war. This might be extrapolated to at least 6,000 people.

Daniel Gookin in *Historical Collections of the Indians in New England*,

wrote that "Manamoyik" consisted of 29 young men and women and 42 adults, 71 Praying Indians in 1674, but does not mention populations of non-Christianized Indians.

In 1675-6 during King Philip's War, Historian William Smith recounts that Monomoit settlers were separated from their countrymen by Indian villages, indicating native populousness.

After King Philip's War, by 1685, Governor Thomas Hinckley reported 115 natives at Monomoyick, listing 1439 native people down to age 12 in the whole the Cape as converts. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel stated that for Plymouth colony which included the Cape, three times as many under 12 years old were uncounted, thus possibly the numbers were 345 for "Manamoyet." (But again, those were Christianized families. If, as historian Douglas Winiarski speculates, 20 percent of natives were not converted, the total population of Monomoyicks would have been that much greater.)

Bourne's protege, the Reverend Samuel Treat who pastored the multifold Nauset area (as Paine calls it: "Eastham, Harwich, East Harbor, Billingsgate and Monomoy") and who was beloved by his native parishioners, listed some 505 Lower Cape Indians in his congregation in 1693. According to History of Eastham, MHC, series 1, v. 8, p. 171, "five hundred men and women, within the limits of Mr. Treat's parish, beside boys and girls who were supposed to be more than three times that number… supposing therefore that there were six persons to a family, a large allowance for Indian population," must be made, speculating that of ninety families there must have been 500 children and 400 adults.

In 1698, Monomoyicks held 14 Christianized households of likely 50 to 100 people, led by "Menekist" (Menekish) and John "Quosson" (Quason). Menekish may also have preached occasionally. Interestingly, Native preachers succeeded Bourne, Treat et al, at the Indian churches on early reservations such as Potanamacut/Potanumicut. (See www.colonialsociety.org/node/1028)

In 1703 the Monomoyick tribe had been "much reduced" according to according to sources such as Nathaniel Morton in *New England's Memorial*. Yet lists of families and individuals meticulously found and recorded by Paine in his *History of Harwich* remain in the scores, even up to the hundreds throughout areas of Harwich, Orleans and Chatham, through the 1700s.

Native Writings of Massachusetts reproduces a document signed by Pastor Solomon Briant that the whole congregation of Praying Indians from Nauset to Mashpee in 1753 consisted of 144 adults, and 116 children.

Some of the names on the 1711 deed had been Josephus, Joseph,

Samuel, John Quason Jr., Sarah Pompmo, Bettie Nopie, Wawhanana, living in Harwich, Eastham, Monamoy and Harwich. Christian or not, their descendants had dwindled. By 1762, it was alleged by Ezra Stiles, Congregational minister and President of Yale, that there were, with Samuel Quason, sachem, only 30 Monomoyicks.

Smallpox epidemics in 1747, 1763, 1766, 1779 (in addition to the plague of the Great Dying brought by white explorers before the colonization of Plymouth which had killed off so many) decimated native populations further, affecting settlers as well.

In *Early Encounters*, William Sears Nickerson cites the last Monomoyick living near Pleasant Bay to be Micah Rafe, dying in 1816.

The loss of population from various areas of the northeast, as writer Carl Waldman and others suggest, was created thus: Men, forced into debt, moved to growing towns, indenturing their service there to pay off the debt. Indians moved away to escape local pressure of debt and possibly of land tax, in the Cape's case, to Maine; in Chatham's case perhaps, even just down to "Mashpah." Another reason for loss: numerous natives from the area went off to fight for the colonists in the French and Indian wars, dying of sickness, such as yellow fever in 1746, and wounds.

Whatever the causes of diminished population – forfeiture, debt, emigration, disease, another cause was that the Monomonacks (Monomoyicks) assimilated at Chatham. As Monomoy Indians left the immediate area, they intermarried with others such as the Potanamaquuts. For instance, the aforementioned Samuel Quason, a descendant of Mattaquason, "married Hannah Attamon of Potanomicut" (likely in the mid-1600s), according to William Nickerson. They also intermarried amongst black slaves, as well as, more rarely, with white families. And many changed their Indian names to English surnames.

Change In Land Policy

If, in the 1600s land was loaned for use, by 1711-1715 when land sales by the Quasons were finalized, the Indians knew exchange meant a lasting farmstead raised on their lands' backs by white settlers, often complete with indentured servants and black or mixed race or native slaves. The rosy picture painted in a legal document of Elisha Hedge's, that Monomoy had not been "profitable" to the Indians anyway, may have existed only in his mind.

By 1715, life had already radically changed for Monomoyicks. They no longer slipt out of the wooded winter lakes down to camp on warm Monomoy in perfect freedom, nor did they set their corn any longer.

Though they may have hunted birds, fished cod and whales and clams there, whaled for English employers, their crops of corn and beans were replaced by English cattle. If Monomoy had offered the anticipation of the summer melt of warmth to those in icy, contracted retreat amongst the sheltered woods then no more to roam it as they had for generations upon generations might well have made the place the perfect symbol of change or loss. During the mystery years of Monomoy, at least before the Revolt, when the whole populace, Indian and white and black alike, was busy with enemies, perhaps the stringent land laws were overlooked and Monomoycks canoed back to the spit.

Many Monomoyicks had sold their lands and moved north to Potanamacut (Potanamaquut) at Pleasant Bay in South Orleans or farther east by around 1714 (Mandell, 1996).

As Indian populations went down it seemed the sale of Indian estates went up. The sachems who once allocated communal and sometimes individual land use to tribal members in the past, had, after English colonization, allocated and sold tracts to individual natives as well as whites for private use which the recipients could sell or pass down at will. "Mattaquason, the old sachem of the tribe, early followed the English custom and parceled out these lands to members of his family and tribe in severalty." (Smith, History of Chatham). As English material and religious lifeway encroached upon that of traditional native social structure, individual natives "adopting the customs of the whites" felt emboldened to sell their land and English town proprietors gave them "legal" protection to do so on town land and at church-centered reserves laid for them such as Potanumacut. The communal use of property changed to that of private landowner.

For a time, Indian land claims and transactions seemed to have been justly administered by a board of overseeing townsmen with natives from the Sauquatuckett tribe (Harwich/Brewster – Satucket), and Joseph Quason of the Monomoy Indians, in May 1703, requesting English oversight! (Paine, 1971). Samuel Treat died in 1717, leaving the tribe without an intermediary between races. By1746, guardians appointed by Massachusetts to protect Indian lands instead ended up usurping and selling them for their own gain in some parts of Massachusetts. In the area from Harwich to Chatham to Eastham, English proprietors tried to extinguish native land claims in 1653, 1672 and again in the 1700s through the mandate of Crown and God.

In Paine's Harwich history there are numerous accounts of friendly land relations with whites. Some sales were deeded in perpetuity, such as that of Sauquatuckett sachem Sachemus to John Freeman, out of "love," in

1676. At least 50 native families (Christianized and not) in the 1700s held land from Chatham to Harwich, with at least 29 selling lands outright to settlers, with some of those estates sold for debt after their owner's death, and at least one rented for 99 years. Yet natives claimed of maltreatment and usurped lands, and it was likely they sold lands both to cope with the new economy, and because they saw the writing on the wall as settlers redistricted, impounded, sold off appropriated acreage and resources, and sued for lands, even encroaching on lands specifically set aside for natives.

The courts made divisions between white and Indian lands and, as Metacom (King Philip) said, "Sometimes the cattle of the English would come into the cornfields of my people, for they did not make fences like the English. I must then be seized and confined till I sold another tract of my country for satisfaction of all damages and costs." For instance, one of the Quansetts, a respected man noted for his whaling skill, was to be fined for the theft of a basket. This family which had captained whaleboats had, next door in Harwich, been barred from starting their own whaling business. The tidal wave of the late 1760s which broke Monomoy incidentally saved Quansett from judgement by preventing the court's adjournment for his appearance. (Had incantations worked?) But how many others were set up by chicanery, enticed into debt, fined for small infractions of English law, forced into selling their land to pay the debts; forced to give their lands to the trustees of Chatham, increasingly after Samuel Treat's death, until the Revolution?

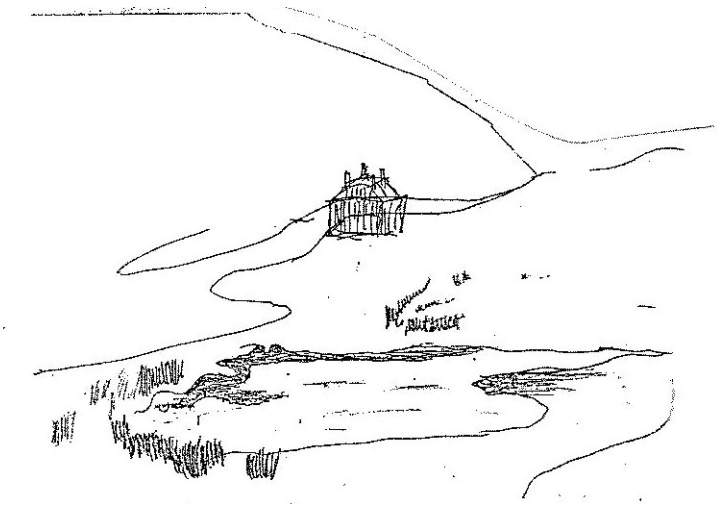
By the Revolution and its aftermath, horticulture had been set into the holdfast patterns of agriculture. Indians had become farmers, craftsmen, whalers, soldiers, and sailors. The quality of bravery as a total gestalt with which existence was faced by the Monomoyicks, had turned into something to employ in harvesting the sea for whales, to use for war over furs and fish which were not skirmishes, but which took in one battle more human lives' numbers than some Monomoyick clans held. Their bravery in the countless colonial wars, their skill at whaling, their generosity with land, had helped the English gain independence while they themselves lost much of theirs. As we have said, they had offered their skills from reservations of land set aside for them (in Chatham's case by the Indians themselves) but in the period after the French and Indian wars, often maintained like a ghetto by the Americans, in terms of what the new laws allowed after the Revolution that Indians had helped them win. While perhaps the new life looked good, the new religion intriguing, while perhaps bravery could substitute for a loss of freedom, while one could ignore the challenge to your manhood by this usurpation, assuaging

it with a basic and very Indian pleasure in life, how many mourned the swift disruptions of continuity, let alone the loss of sovereignty?

The original inhabitants had not counted intolerance as one of their vices. If the treatment in Chatham was not as overtly prejudiced as elsewhere, yet still something of an attitude which allowed men to do what they would in the name of their God, gave leeway for that linked team of swindles coupled with intolerance which decimated the first culture here.

Nonetheless, there are those now with last names such as Eldredge who dwell on the mainland of Chatham and who are in part Wampanoag. Names like Attaquin (Attaquon) live now, not near the "lookout" but in other areas of the Cape, Massachusetts and Maine. I think of one beautiful woman (who has kept her traditions alive, taking them with her farther north) whose face excises the past hundreds of years right out of time (leaving me back in a soft and rhythmful, time-filled era, where the seasons and the seas, the trees and the real reasons for a human existence persuaded us). "We are still here," she says of the people.

Over the wash of space we came, they came, you came. Some were tolerant and open-minded. Some were piratical and prejudiced. Yet after the piracy, they will need the mercy of the lands they have changed and the elements they have scorned; and after the prejudice you will need the help of the people you have denigrated.



13

Post Colonialism, the Age of the Seas
A Damaged Land Leads Men to the Ocean

To be a whaleman, a farmer, a coaster may have seemed a good way to gain a living. To live in one place without moving about might have seemed a good idea. The supposed comforts which the new specialized economy bought made not only Monomoyicks change, but made the land pay its dues.

The "improvements" the English brought to the area changed it. Draining the marshes to plant crops, cutting up salt hay, the salt marshes began to erode into the creeks. With bounties on wolves, they and/or the coyotes they may in fact have been diminished quickly. Trapping out the last of the otters and beavers for the fur trade at Aptucxet and beyond, these animals were made scarce, and with their loss, and the cutting and draining of woodlands and swamps, wet areas dried up.

After the dominance of invaders over Indigenous, then came the dominance of the Crown over the new inhabitants; came a resentment of rank – came a vast reorganization by blood, of power. Oppression would react to establish a democratization of coerced resources, a supposed material equality based on specialism, ambition, and those redistributed gifts of the land. Englishmen rooted in a medieval life way of tithe-giving peasant, tied to his landowner, craftsman tied to his village, had, around the salty, sandy, scruffy, grassy Cape and her bays, pushed aside tribal men to search for an independence not rooted in earth but in economics. Now the new Americans were "freed," almost-modern man on his way. The new order would be mistaken for freedom, while it was in fact a liberty, an independence from actual overt tyranny. The Revolution would set its own inevitable limits, deliverable to our age. Freedom was something the long-term inhabitants previously had known.

Bare lights of power began to show unyielding as sun on a sandy desert. Who began to sense an inevitability? Began to feel a sorrow for our acts? Some began to align over the bodies of the dead, with or against a

conscience, to mourn their wrongs. (Even as those wronged mourned the loss of the beautiful migratory way within the fullness of the earth and her times: following the slippery dash of wet silvery fish upstream in spring, the unhusking of orange and garnet to the bare kernel of winter, the release of deer from the outlands to the swamp. Enough.)

From the age of invasion to the wars with the north, to the incipient revolt, the landscape shone out though pockets of big oaks and pines which still hung out their nightly shadows. Horse and fours clattered on newly widening sandy roads where the few houses stand.

After the Revolution the darkly wooded shores of the Cape continued to be seriously logged for ships' parts, as it had been before the war, not to mention timber for houses. From the war's end in 1781, so many trees had been cut for housing, fuel, ship's parts, weatherboard for export, that 20 years later in 1802 in Chatham it was written that several small swamps from which "considerable peat had been dug," were cleared for pasture and meadow on shore. Salting had littered the area with vats through the Revolution, taking wood to boil out the water, until evaporation stills were invented in the last decade of the century. "Not a fruit tree grows in Chatham, and not more than 65 acres of woodland are left." These were near Harwich and were of pitch pine. Soon the town would begin to replant.

I awaken in a land now denuded of the dim dark dire huge boles of white oak and of howling cedar wolven swamps ashore, nearby. I can hear the sloshing like leaves, like rains, of an ocean, and a soft pianoforte plays. There is a scent of tidal acidity, of algae and bacteria replicating in the cuts in the laundered perfume of the sands. There is a cleansing odor of ocean. Bayberry and pine, honeysuckle and rose braid together like an elaborate wax candle, burn their smoky incense under the sun.

14

The Roads of the Sea Lead to Wealth During Early Federalism
(Transatlantic Trade, Conflicts Over Resources Continue)

In 1802, most business is carried on near Old Harbor, at this time right at the north of Monomoy. There was a windmill on Atwood Street near Stage Harbor, one of six in Chatham since 1790. Six salt vats adorned the shore.

The building of a nation no longer tied to Britain meant increased mercantilism via the sails of ships. Not only economic competition but ecological imperatives increased shipping: With the denudation, with farmland increasingly limited, as Henry Kittredge has suggested in many of his Cape Cod histories, men had no choice but to turn to the sea for a living. After the Revolt, there was incentive in government bounty money to build ships in America. In Chatham "between the vats and the flakes" for fish and for salting, a steady stream of small vessels, sloops to schooners to brigs, between about 40 and 140 tons came out, many harbored in and around Monomoy. For those many Cape men involved in the world trades, their larger ships and barks were for the most part built off-Cape.

Ultimately, as ships increased in numbers and size, and the towns around harbors flourished, the sea more and more commanded the local life: Its wealth in saltfish could be sold. Government bounty money encouraged not only shipbuilding, but the renaissance of the fishing industry. Primary resources, agricultural surplus, the products of crafts could be carried by ships, financed by entrepreneurs on a large or small scale, sent out on the offshore routes of trades to near or far places.

The local trade did well throughout Cape Cod Bay and Massachusetts Bay, with brig and schooner packets carrying pine wood split and cord wood of oak, pine boards, shingles of various woods, back and forth from the north side of the Cape to Plymouth and Boston. The south side's Nantucket Sound carried salt-fish, corn, flax, hides, sheep – Martha's Vineyard was the wool capital of the area – tallow, shoes out to the southern colonies, in return for southern hogs and corn, southern flour, cornmeal, molasses, tobacco,

cotton, timber, indigo. Traders used the goods from these coastal trades to carry back such things as fine cloths from Europe, rum, sugar, coffee from South America, coffee newly planted in the East and West Indies and Africa. (Some say there was so much salt fish on stages around Stage Harbor, it thus gained its name. The salt fish was a currency of trade.)

Conflicts between the English and the French on this continent had ceased for a while after La Perouse destroyed many Hudson's Bay posts during the late stages of the American Revolution, and after the English and the Americans signed the peace Treaty of Versailles (Treaty of Paris) in 1783, which officially ended the War for Independence. But in Europe conflicts would continue between world powers with the new independent America involved until after the Napoleonic Wars up to 1815.

By 1780 or 90, "Old Betty's" new beacon fire and lantern pilotage would give shelter and food to sailors, once again moored near Wreck Cove. (Wreck Cove during this time was still north of Inward Point at the opposite side of Port Fortune as it had been since at least the time of Stewart's Tavern. By at least 1858, Wreck Cove would be mapped by some as below Inward.) The pilotage was merely a shack, not a tavern; still likely north of Inward, south of the piece which would later comprise Shooter's Island on maps, but it presaged the return of population to the area. By 1800, about seven families were back on Monomoy.

Though debts incurred by the War for Independence burdened, our hunger for overseas goods increased. From 1781 on, we bartered the whale oil we could get our hands on, the farm goods of inland and coastal Massachusetts, for luxuries. We traded for gold and silver, molasses, slaves, surreptitiously to and from a West Indies blocked to us by the British. Slavers continued to travel to Africa, although after our Revolution, the practice was outlawed. New animals discovered, new political shoals, impelled men to exploit different natural and geographical realms. (I wondered, why, though some may turn to invention to do their work, others use slaves. The tribes of the Pacific Northwest who were not agricultural, enslaved other humans as did Mesoamericans (often for human sacrifice), as of course did American planters. What cruel entitlement makes that choice?)

If the years before the Revolution had known ships primarily to leave the girth of wooded darkness to travel the North Atlantic from Canada to Europe, to its other side at the pungently perfumed intrigue of African coasts, back to the froth of "West Indean" seas, the years immediately after would expand the seas, seeing sails stretching ever more to the South Atlantic flowing between parts of South America and lower Africa, to verge beyond to the Pacific, not only for whales. From the post-

Revolutionary years until the century's turn, during which Monomoy was an isle of the bleak north with the new pilotage on her and with much of her once more in pasture, in order to avoid the international intricacies of Atlantic waters from Europe to Canada to the West Indies, we began to ship to the Orient for spices, silks, teas, in exchange for a commodity they desired, for which we had begun to hunt since before the Revolution in places like the Falkland Islands: Ships and captains from the Cape, were by the 1790s, rounding the Horn to enter the fir and cedar spangled foggy inlets of Vancouver Island and Seattle, to take from the natives there by barter and bloodshed alike, the Pacific Northwest's otter and fur seals for trade at the port of Canton with the Manchu rulers of China, in return for export China and porcelain, mahogany, ginseng and ginger. They also traded with Japan and India and the East Indies. Exotic woods from India, peacocks, gold, were brought home to increasing demands. Adding these new items to the menu of riches available to old ports of call, the New Englanders continued to trade molasses and rum for slaves and Madeira wine, for specie and linen, shipping between Africa, Spain, Ireland, now often at great risk as political troubles heated up.

While conflicts between the Americans and the French were soothed by their alliance during the Revolution, the self-serving Jay Treaty with England in 1795 would almost cause an American war with France who was then at war with England. America neglected French interests, ignoring her former military and monetary help during the Revolution, in favor of a compromise with England which would help Americans gain back some of free trade in Canada and the West Indies, so that she could repay her ever growing debts. Chatham bankers had opted for this negotiation, hoping to end England's instigation of Indian hostilities in the west, hoping to end her privateering of our ships in the West Indies, and to, by this alliance, bulwark our shipping against French "spoilations." The English were supposed to let us fish in Newfoundland by treaty, but in fact they harassed us. They continued to ignore the rights of sailors at sea, impressing them illegally, and generally acted as if America was still a colony.

Both countries bothered our shipping, boarding our vessels, thinking we might be transporting illicit arms to one side or another. (Americans preyed on English, the French on the English, the English on the Americans, and Monomoy may well have been involved as we will discuss.) We could have done well simply trading up and down the coast to ourselves, but the post-war was a time when men and women wanted a plethora of material goods after a time of denial. Speculation during and after the war made fortunes, while those who had acquired wealth before, such as the Otis family of Barnstable, so instrumental in shaping the War for Independence,

lost theirs. All in all, knotted European politics would keep the small, three-masted "Merchantmen," those square-rigged, frigate-like, ships in the style of England's East Indiamen, moored to murky waters of illicit "Neutral" trade until the War of 1812 ended. Neutral trade supposedly meant that the ships in question ventured to European countries which were not involved in French or English hostilities. In practice, this trade meant that while Americans declared that they were "neutral" as concerned European politics, England and France did not hold them so. The European embargoes of the new United States' trade in various competed-for ports, their denial of free-trade to the new states, their searches and seizures and impressment of sailors, led to American circumnavigation of political circumstance by offshore transactions entailing smooth deals, bribes to customs agents, smuggling of the coveted goods to unlit coves such as, mayhap, even those on Monomoy.

15

Pass This Place with Caution
The World of the Seas

Looking out from the lighthouse tower, one pictures terrible storms arising out of the north; one thinks of the swift disruptions the sea is heir to. I look around and picture the slues (colloquially, the word described those fast sluices of narrow rips between underwater sand mounds obtruding through the seas); imagine the "Stump Ground" on the bottom between Pollock and Shovelful's' slender waters, avoided by men dragging for lost anchors because of its sometimes 40' long trunks, the remnants of a white cedar swamp. (More proof of Webb's Island?) *I remember the first time I came out here in an 18-foot metal boat. Of a sudden the sun fled, and the seas were high. In the area of the tip where the open sea meets Nantucket Sound, right near Point Rip, somewhere near Bearse's and Shovelful shoals, waters became like high agate green whales, teeth smooth, ready to take us in, a metaphor for the chaos to come. A wind had come up like a forest fire out of nowhere on our return, replete with a strange young light showing through a "dungeon fog." I was new out here, and I didn't realize why the captain's face had gone pale. There is nothing like the feeling where the waters of the bay meet open water. Despite the fear, or perhaps because of it, there is elation.*

The World of the Banks

Since the early 1600s the eddies off her southeast side were famed. Since colonial times wrecks piled up in a graveyard as wicked as the Peaked Hill Bars at the backside of the Cape between Eastham and Provincetown or off Cape Hatteras farther south. The Shoals of Monomoy are so bad that the Mayflower's Captain Jones returned to Provincetown Harbor for anchorage from which to explore. They lay east of the isles, delineating the place where shallow waters drop into deeper seas. Ninety miles east of them, or so, lies George's Bank, stretching 150 miles east and north. The Stellwagen Bank where migrating whales feed off Provincetown, was on 18th century maps, named "Stoney Ground" or "Crab Banks" and it

bordered the northeast side of the Cape. Above her was the Jeffrey's Ledge continuing to Casco Bay from Cape Ann. These Gulf of Maine ledges were a part of the system which held the Grand Banks in Canadian waters. South of the Gulf's configuration and extending its underwater basin to the Mid-Atlantic states is the Atlantic Bight, of which George's is a part. It lies directly to the east and south of Monomoy. To its west is Nantucket Sound, stretching to that island and the Vineyard. (Connecting the Elizabeth Islands, the northerly channel between the Cape and the Islands, is the Inner Passage.) The Gulf Stream spreads northward past Nantucket and Monomoy and the George's, through an edge of the Bight, past Stellwagen, to diffuse towards Europe. The Labrador current, as we have mentioned in Chapter 1, passes down past the Gulf of Maine towards Monomoy, to mix into the Atlantic

The coastal plains where Monomoy is laid are covered with shallow waters often no more than 15 feet deep and sometimes less: there is Pollock Rip about three miles southeast of her land's tip; Bearse's Shoal close to shore; between those two shoals runs a deeper channel into 40 plus foot deep Butler's Hole which lies off Point Rip at the southernmost tip. Below, to the southeast beyond Bearse's, are Shovelful shoals, also known as or Stone Horse shoals (and in the late 1700s named Snow Drop Shoal). Below it, nearer to Nantucket, are Little Round and Great Round shoals, once named Old and New Rose and Crown shoals. (The Rose and the Crown was the very symbol of Britain herself.) To the southwest is Handkerchief Shoal.

The shoals themselves, as well as the navigational knowledge of these set down in charts, are their own world. The offshore dimensions of whales and schools of fish, of pelagic birds and fishing vessels is too, another world entirely from that on land. Within the vast country of the George's and the Grand Banks are other nations: Fishing Rip, Davis Banks, Sable Banks, the Browns. Here, as they have been, are worlds within worlds which skewed the waters towards fish, towards submerged vessels, towards the unknown. The swirling buoyant waters pushed by the banks' narrows, flowing through depths and rises of trenches and manipulated by the Coriolis Effect of moon and sun, create in the underwater valleys, thermoclines, which push warm upwellings of nourishing sediment important for plankton, thus harboring places of shelter with nutrients important for fish. It is also they which create swift eddies which attract ships to ground. The world of sand and gravel under the waters are as important to navigators as the weather or the stars. Their names may vary, but their treachery remains unchanged.

Wrecks Inevitable

Sands of the place move about; the tidal washes switch and change over the flats; lantern flame swings moveable shadows; an airy feeling. If the land is uncertain, so too are the seas. If the sharp tea kettle of wind on land can bring serious damage, so it can on the seas. Stuck out into the sea, the same prominence which got it discovered early, which made it a place of beach, tidal flat and marsh, also made it an area of precarious waters, weathers, and shoals. As the name Mallebarre had proclaimed, the shoals were wicked. As the name Wreck Point indicated, this was a place of ruin. Here was the Scylla and Charybdis (even as the French had named Cape Breton) of the New World. In this dangerously subtle place, fraught with impulsive weather, it was little wonder ships wrecked carrying cargo or passengers. Though it was said mostly foreign ships went down off Cape waters, with the local masters too familiar with and competent over our waters to be fooled, still it did happen.

From 1802 to the mid eighteen hundreds, two brothers in their annual Blunts' American Coast Pilot, as well as the Massachusetts Humane Society in a pamphlet stocked at all the Custom's houses and issued by Marine Insurance companies to ship owners to keep as a manual onboard, warn of the damage which these waters at the southeast of the Cape can do. The advice was: "If a vessel is cast away at low water, it ought to be left with as much expedition as possible; because the fury of the waves is then checked in some measure by the bar, and because the vessel is generally broken to pieces with the rising flood. But seamen shipwrecked at full sea, ought to remain on board till near low water, for the vessel does not then break to pieces, and by attempting to reach the land before the tide ebbs away, they are in great danger of being drowned." This was a time, remember, when ships were the ruling form of freight and navigation. There were no electric gadgets to help a navigator.

With the increased use of the sea roads came wrecks, and with wrecks came man's response to them in beacons to guide, huts to shelter. To protect the investment, not to mention the lives of sailing men, the lifesaving services would eventually become seriously organized. Until then, wrecked mariners would often largely have to rely on the townspeople or whatever boats might be anchored nearby to send out aid to their foundering vessels. A woman who lived on Monomoy between 1804-24 and possibly before reported that vessels which thought they were far out to sea in "thick weather" often "fetched up" on the beach. The calls of "Oh Wreck" would pass down the four or five houses. She and various Bearses recall wrecked sailors such Captain Lawson being cared for in people's parlors. She also states that the Andersons, Boardmans, Olsens and Wheelers settled at

Monomoy and Chatham on account of being wrecked here.

Captain Lawson (spelled too, Lamson) in 1801-2, right before the first Humane Society hut went up, reports about his gale-swept and abandoned ship, of "...the foremast by the violence of the striking, breaking in two places. We then beat over the shoal and drove up on the beach, but we could not discover anything. At 3 A.M...we trod down the snow sufficiently to...keep ourselves from freezing." Then the sailors, walking about four miles on the long beach, became "feeble." One, having lost mittens in the surf, became "helpless". Another changed color from "white to purple." Finally saved by the few Monomoy inhabitants, they were transported to Chatham to be "unfrozen" by an application of heated blankets.

Over the years, numbers of wrecks were viewed close to Monomoy. Sometimes, as the isle moved about, sand closed in over the dead ships. Seawater might be surrounded, changed to a "hole" to eventually silt in to a brackish freshwater pond where the ships' bones would still show for a generation, until devoured by muck and time. By Chatham oral tradition, a wreck of a hundred years ago, possibly the steamer Perritt, still shows its heavy wood and rusty spokes in Little Station Pond. (I have not seen it.)

As the sun comes down, though the air is chilly, the sands are still warm as bird eggs, soft as feathered brood breasts. Nothing, for now, is at war, no wind with glacial grains swept up from the belly of the seabeds. Bending to sands, to investigate a muskrat track, there is a sweet scent, vanillaish. Lingering opposite from where Wreck Point was washed away into feisty waters, I pause. The area has a vastness beyond itself.

Writing without electric light, looking over the bearded beige sandy moors of the South Island, the fringes of a few pitch pines and the bayberry turning bleak in the shadow, like candles whose wicks are puffed out to smoke, the sun goes out. The night winds meet, east to west, warmth to chill coming from the hollow north. A howling begins. Pressure drops. The warm honeyed scent, the sensual distant scent of a sunny, salty, sandy, warm day changes to a thick threat of something green, watery, veiled, something of algae and browning kelp. There is something fearful in the darkness. My kerosene lamp quavers. I tuck myself into bed and wish someone were here to protect me. As the winds come up, it is at once exciting, peaceful and scary. I think how terrifying it must be if this were a piece of wood unanchored from land, loosed to the ploys of the wind.

Humane Huts

How dark it would have been in those days before rehabitation, coming in through the passages with intermittent torches to pilot you, those of Indians who would run by canoe or by foot past the tip to light your way, or those

of solitary townsfolk out to the isle for pasturing or fishing, or those of an occasional tavern or pilotage. How bleak to find in rain and snow, no beacon, no help perhaps, at all.

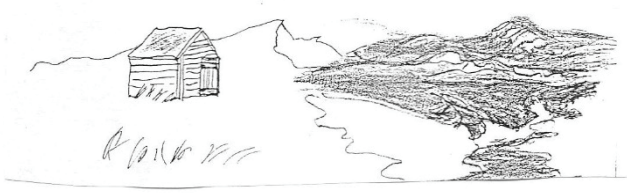
After the Revolution in 1789, a Lighthouse Act passed by the new federal government put funding for the towers on a federal basis under Alexander Hamilton's Treasury Department. The British Royal Humane Society, following a Dutch lead, had started in 1774. The Boston Humane Society, soon to be known as the Massachusetts Humane Society, had started erecting shelters in 1786. In 1802 it increased its efforts.

By 1802, the Massachusetts Humane Society, established after the Revolution as a copy if not an outgrowth of a British lighthouse and lifesaving vessel protection service, erected two shelters here, one on each side of the Point. They were two of a chain of huts, called Charity houses, down the dangerous outer beaches of the east of the Cape, six in the beginning, the first at Provincetown, the last at Cape Mallebarre (Monomoy). Their locuses would be catalogued carefully in annual issues of Blunts' Coastal Pilot, the counterpart of Eldridge Tide and Pilot of today and the Rand McNally of its watery time. "The hut stands 200 yards from the ocean, S.E. from the entrance of Wreck Cove, half a mile. Between the mouth of the cove and the hut is Stewart's knoll, an elevated part of the beach. The distance of the hut from the commencement of the beach is 6 miles, and from its termination 4 miles...Richard Sears Esq. of Chatham has engaged to visit...the huts. Two miles below the...hut is a fishing-house, built of thatch in the form of a wigwam. It stands on the west side of the beach, a quarter of a mile from the ocean. Annually in September it is renewed; and generally remains in tolerable condition during the winter. From Stewart's knoll, south, to the extremity, it is lowest in the middle. In this valley, and in other low places, fresh water may be obtained by digging two feet into the sand." The area is further described as having less beach grass than Chatham Beach, and as being three quarters of a mile wide with a harbor on the east side of the beach, to whit, "Stewart's Bend, where vessels may anchor safely." Author James Freeman in 1802, suggests that the premier hut be placed farther north to be nearer to the high tide which occasionally "breaks over from the ocean into Wreck Cove." (Those breaks, blow outs, cut throughs, were to be a terror of future lifesavers and patrols, for they could flood in an instant, carrying men and equipment down.)

The hut was typically eight by eight by even feet high. "Each hut stands on piles...with a sliding door on the south; a sliding shutter on the west, and a pole rising fifteen feet above the top of the building on the east." They held matches or a tinder box, a stove with a small wood supply, a map, sometimes a compass. "Within, it is supplied either with straw or

hay and is farther accommodated by a bench." They were stocked with instructions for finding fresh water and your way inland. Eventually they would hold hardtack, even a Bible.

Where I walk on the northwestern flats of Godwit bar, where the sea covers the place, across from where the dunes rise, somewhere here was the Wreck Tavern, (although at least one author claims it had been nearer to the lighthouse. Down there, beyond, where now the next island is dim in the distance, Stewart's Bend was tucked.) Somewhere south of Godwit, likely down a bit more towards Broad Creek, looking across the calmer western waters to where buildings ashore on the Cape blur, was the first Humane Hut. Or maybe it was where that abandoned blind is over there, across from the shed of the dunes, the blowout between, the one lone cedar. And the wigwam, the hut adapted from the Indians, up island below Inward, in the lee of the western shore, rested somewhere at the knob of Inward and the slit of tide across the south isle, which is what is left of Hospital Pond. Then there may have been aspens at the edge of a freshwater marsh near a fresh pond, although it would seem from early descriptions there was just lone, desolate sandy beach, with dune and dune grass. Then the wigwam was closer to the tip of the whole, by miles, for the taffy sand pulled longer at the top of the place than at the bottom.



Embargo and War

By 1807, boat houses with a lifeboat and rockets were added near some refuges to aid locals in lifesaving, but this duo did not seem to reach the Cape until the Humane Society combined its jurisdiction with the federal government's in the 1840s.

From 1807 ships out of the Cape, including Old Harbor and Wreck Cove were to stay put. Per order of presidents Jefferson and then Monroe, all American vessels were to be docked at home for their own good. This angered Cape men, who with other New Englanders had finagled the difficulties of Britain's Post War refusal to give us access to old ports from the West Indies to Canada, waded through Napoleon's conflicts with England, English maltreatment of our vessels. As had been going on for nearly a quarter of a century in regard to Europe, illegal voyages were made

now outside the U.S. embargo. Ships avoiding politics altogether fished or went to the Orient or whaled out for many year voyages. During this strange time, fish helped to remake Cape fortunes, as did the occasional plundering of foreign vessels.

By 1812, even as Napoleon fought still with the British, America would be at war with England again overfishing and fur rights, over Indian rights to their western lands. Many Chatham men left here for Canada and other areas for good, carrying Cape names with them. From 1812 to 1814, the hated British Commander Richard Raggett in his warship the Spencer threatened to blow up the saltworks dotting the shore from Old Harbor to Potanamaquut unless he received tribute money. As in the last war, blockades again kept the whole Cape fleet in irons. Whalers, fishing ships, traders from brig to topsail schooner, bottled in harbor rotted. Locals turned back to farming their soft land to survive.

Privateers

Privateering would continue through the War of 1812, despite efforts of diplomacy begun in 1789 to stop it, in both war and peace time. The occasional plundering of foreign vessels was worth good money as well as, once more, being a heroic act. During the years of embargo and of conflict, small whaleboats ran the unpopular order to keep our ships at home as they later ran the British blockades. Though the embargo, often oxcarts crossed the Cape with supplies for war, for profit in trade and for survival, such as salt and produce, or with their prizes of captured cargos, before transporting them by covert sail to Boston. Jeremy's Gutter at Boat Meadow Creek, Eastham/Orleans was dredged out by local hands in 1804. Ships which had surreptitiously rowed or sailed through her to avoid the embargo now did so to abuse and to elude Raggett. Cape ships would privateer British ships, from topsail schooners, brigs, whalers, whatever they could convert into fast maneuverable vessels. Our packets would run out at low tides, when the British frigates drew too deep to move - dashing out and back with local made salt and war supplies going to and from places like Long Island: At Chatham, "One of their big ships anchored here and plagued us dreadfully. She hung around here a long time, as she drew too much water to come into the harbour. Then our fishing boats would run out. But she would soon come back, and our packets couldn't run, so we couldn't get fish or coin either." (Smith, *History of Chatham*).

Mooncussers At Powder Hole

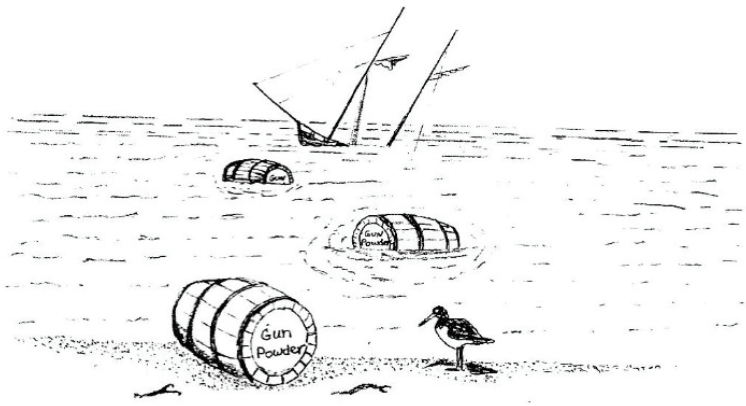
Men who ran British ships ashore by any ruse were considered heroes. As the English blockade brought Chatham to near ruin, mooncussing too

would have been considered a noble deed.

One shipwreck gave the name to an emerging harbor on the southwest end of the place: In the early eighteen hundreds, a three-masted topsail schooner with 13 tons of gunpowder went down at what was named afterwards Powder Hole. This probably happened during the War of 1812 when ships were running out from Chatham to avoid the British blockade. Topsail schooners as well as fast brigantines were, from the Revolutionary War on, usually American privateers, while frigates were British men of war. No source determines the vessel's nationality. Some oral tradition says that no ship went down; instead there were barrels of self-sealing gunpowder stored in the "Hole" and that is how it gained its name. Who stored the gun powder barrels, the Royal Navy or the Americans?

Did Monomoy mooncuss once again? Had she wrecked the Powder Hole vessel? What better place to do it from than this intrepid bar? If her inhabitants could have, undoubtedly they would have, once again, mooncussed the alien. But the spit had eroded farther away from the secret alley of Jeremy's Gutter. Too, her own secret passageways had now firmly closed up. She possessed fewer inlets out of which to run, in which to hide.

There is a secret meeting in the cedar swamp. Avoiding Old Harbor we borrow techniques of camouflage from the Indians. We launch our whaleboats out from an area on Morris Island to cross the bottom of Port Fortune to the Moy. The night is stern with ice and lightlessness. The scent of coming winter is heavy. Woodfires; a church bell, a sheep bleating. We expect frigates tacking north to Boston. We will set out mischief at the point, and disappear like vapor, like spirits.



16

After Peace: The Global Seas
Post War Prosperity Begins

From the end of the war in 1815, when winter apparently lasted all year on the Cape, to the time of the first lighthouse on Monomoy, shipping increased. Local towns had, for the roads and treasures of the seas, intensified, no more along colonial village greens, but along harbors and the post or Old King's roads near them. The sea, with her fish and her whales and her routes to trade ports, was still very much the master of the coastal areas. (Often, the coastal areas dominated American politics, much to the inland farmers' discontent.) Until well after the stagecoach traveled what had been the King's Road, so little were roads used, so much was the sea the route, that it was said "Northsiders sold corn to Boston, while Southsiders bought it from Connecticut." From 1815 on, packets from the south increasingly would freight lumber from Georgia to New York, while packets on the bay side would carry mail and passengers and fuel wood to Boston. Both sides of the Cape now carried saltfish, both sides coasted down south and to Europe and back. The post-war years began a subtle change out of the dependency on nature and its weathers, yields, seasons, to a control over it; a heightened change towards that questionable free-for-all called by civilization, "progress." American New Englanders still traded for luxuries to import to a new America striving to be genteel; traded to pay off war debts.

Before the invasion of the American west the age of global sail and trade was a cosmopolitan one, when ships would enlarge their sail capacity and tonnage to expand the world of local man's dominion over other worlds of human goods. New, larger, three masted ships, three and four masted barks and barquentines, combining square and lateen rigs, would cross the seas. Topsail schooners, brigs, brigantines, cutters still skittered over the waters as well. Because of the post-colonial land's limitations as a coastal strip impeded by mountain ranges, the wealth of empires was sought in foreign ports; not yet from the already inhabited landmass beyond the new states.

America entered a period of expansionism. Men began to move west into occupied lands. Locally, salting industries continued to flourish; whaling continued out of Falmouth and Provincetown. Coasting, that schooner trading up and down the Atlantic, fishing, lumbering, farming, expanded. Packets carrying passengers and cargo from Boston, New York the Carolinas, made New England and east coast ports important. Immigrants started crossing the seas in Liverpool packets in ghastly cramped quarters.

Monomoy Marsh Disputed Again

As life returned to normal, with logging and over-grazing for war materials and for war-time food beginning to cause erosion, with farmlands limited now by not just population, but by that dissolution of topsoil, Monomoy continued to supply all-important salt marsh. Although from 1752 to the 1800s, the salt meadow had narrowed considerably, it was still very much in use. By 1819, meadow above and below Inward to Sandy Point (now the southern terminus) was once again battled over. The matter was settled when land from James Head to Strong Island was auctioned to Richard Sears Jr., Jonah Crowell, Caleb Nickerson, Salathiel Nickerson, Mulford Howes and others. A part between there and Morris Island's easterly bluff went to the same Sears, and the Crowell, the same Nickersons plus a Simeon, Sears Atwood, Samuel Young and Samuel Doane (some of those, whaling names from farther out to Provincetown). David Bearse, Crowell, Sears, Doane, with a Reuben Collins Taylor, divided "the new point on the Monnamoit Great Beach" south of Wreck Cove and Stewart's Knoll," that is, south of Inward point "bounded on the north" by meadow and beach of the so called "old purchase, running from the bay easterly to the Atlantic Ocean, thence Southerly and Westerly by said ocean and the sea water" around the point "by the Bay to the first…bound." But by this time, the place's use as pasture was changing.

Famous Lighthouse, First Light

We sit on the low wooden platform which surrounds the lighthouse. In front of us are gentle rolling dunes. To the back is a calm, sheltering copse of pitch pines where Yellow-rumped warblers chip.

There was no Cape Cod canal, although William Bradford had by 1627 dreamt of its convenience. Thus, every ship which left the Cape for the south passed here. Every ship travelling north to Boston passed here. With waters as famous as those of Cape Horn, as treacherous as an ambitious man hiding his secrets, it was inevitable that a lighthouse would be requested for erection near the lethal tip of Monomoy. Lighthouses began to be built around 1716, often built by towns or by individual tavern

keepers, such as that at Tarpaulin Cove in 1759 while we were still a British dominion (Elwood Mills, *The View from Lookout Hill*). Official U.S. lights began to be built when Alexander Hamilton became the head of that early Treasury Department created shortly after the War for Independence. But in places like Monomoy a technical response to the dangers of the sea was often slow in coming. In the late 1700s, Nauset folk protested the erecting of a lighthouse, because, whether mooncussers or simply salvagers, the light would disadvantage their business of pickings from the seas' wrecks. Nonetheless, Nauset had her first lighthouse (the Cape Cod or Highland light) by the 1790s, while Monomoy had none until the 1820s. On Monomoy, although Humane huts might shelter a man who found his way to shore, in the early 1800s, after the decline of "Old Betty's, " little would guide him there. However, with new mechanisms almost daily beginning to be invented to control the adversity of nature's impulses, it was inevitable that Monomoy be added to the growing list of Cape Cod lights. (In 1820, 50 lighthouses accompanied the dangers of the whole of the east coast.) With the sea so crucial and Monomoy so importantly situated on her roads, a guiding lighthouse finally was built.

The first official light and keeper's house in one (the living quarters were in the tower) on Monomoy was of whitewashed brick, commissioned in 1823 to be built at Sandy Point on the southeast of the island's tip. It would stand only 25 feet above the sea. It would be lit with eight lamps, each with 13-inch reflectors. The original lantern was wrought iron; lamps had "silver-coated copper reflectors, and magnifying lenses." In 1828, 23,000 candlepower worth of oil-lamps with reflectors were first fired. (Many first lights such as the prototype of Nauset light which may have functioned intermittently from 1777 throughout the war until its rebuilding in 1797, were simply towers of timber or of brick or stone with a wooden turret for the lamp.) Wood proved too hazardous, but the use of iron for the turret and eventually the whole tower was not comprehensively used until the 1840s.

In the final years of that elegantly crafted Federalist era of a new nation, when the American east tried to dominate world trade at a time when the west was first "opening," before the Clipper ship skidded around the Horn in record times to California, when the lighthouse was manned and the new lightships went in, the distressed ships off Monomoy might be sighted by lightkeepers or lightships, but still, for the most part, aided by whatever local boats were available, here on Monomoy, those often of fishermen.

Like an island itself within a wilderness of oceans, the lighthouse tower is damp and cold as I walk up the metal snail's spiral stairs to trim and light the wick. Like a fleshless bone, the metal seems to reflect chill back to my

own interior armature. It is a gloomy day. Silvery rains seed the sands.

What a fearful thing to be within the lighthouse, climb the stairs inside its tower to the top, watch a three-masted, multi-tiered, sail ship flounder and man small boats, perhaps to be engorged by whale seas, and be able to do little but light a fire outside as a further signpost to wrecked men of tantalizing land. For the beginning of its calling, the tower is alone, looking up to two Humane shelters, perhaps still to a few houses just as in the early 1800s, perhaps people who had moved back after 1814 to live. Most likely it was just bare salt pasture grass, ready for reaping off the fertile marsh in the post war years. At first, you could light the beacon fire or run shouting to whatever humans were moored on the isle, hoping they could man their dinghies and get to the wrecked quickly, watching, helpless, as men died. Here was an iron loneliness at the south tip, heralding the world's expansion from that of the North Atlantic seas to those of the globe before the friendly light of a village would adorn it.

17

Seafish and Whitewash Village

Shortly after the lighthouse went up on Monomoy, here was the modern age emerging its head from the post-medieval womb of the past The west was very soon to be looked on as a new storeroom of usable commodities: grasslands to fatten cattle, prairies on which to grow golden wheat; steamships, then railroads to transport this; telegraphs to control it by information; new weapons to wipe out the inhabitants and the animals in the way; gold itself in the body of the rocks for mining, for financing the new uses of the land.

Here, after the interruptions in trade brought on by the conflicts in Europe and those which they had made with the Americans, the east had new ships for transport. The Cape lacked visible treasure now, save for such things as the forests it had begun to plunder, the sand it would use for glass by 1828, but it did have the sea. It had first access by its position, to oceans on which to ply the ships which brought the wealth of other countries to America, her wealth to them. It had, as that war of sails swelled or quieted, waters filled with life, for even as men had farmed its wealth, it had the sea's wealth in fish; even as it had had whales and their treasure of oil. Of the world of ships and fish which the world of the sea brought, no place had more direct access to the scaled weight of sea treasures and the watery roads than Monomoy.

Monomoy sometimes feels as if you are slipping off the edge of the earth. Sand moves as the tidal-fleet waters enter. Bird-like, you are suspended a minute, then dropped. Or rushed out past the arctic colored fluids into the moisture, like a barque.

No wonder thoughts of unlanded adventure could swell a boy's heart. If you wanted the sea in the inviting calm, its shaking could make you wish for a berth on land. You could ship on for a whale hand out of Falmouth or Provincetown, from six months to two years. You could work your way up on a coaster from sailor to mate to captain. You could opt not to deal with your body alone for the silver of fishy treasures; instead to deal with your

wits (and sometimes weapons) as well for those goods of gold and ivory of the worlds in the tropics and beyond. Or you could fish.

You cannot live on the Cape, or any coastal place, without finally having to become involved with the fishy life of the area. As much as the coastal grasses which wade into the salt liquid do, the fish insist you get to know them, understand something of their ways. Men go out to fish and leave behind them the laws of the earthly world for a realm as close to release as anything, a place of instant victory, a place of ethereal light, a place as robust as sex, as awful as god.

Fish, fish come and go, migrating closer to the shallow banks and coasts during the spring; waggling back out in fall in vivid spectrumed constellations. A few reverse the pattern. There are those which spawn in summer, those which do so in the dead of winter. Fit to niches determined by factors such as temperature and food supply, certain fishes live in shallow water while some prefer depths; some eat at the surface, some at the bottom. As off the Cape itself, there were fishes in season off Monomoy. The shallow waters around Monomoy are warm in the summer and quite cold in the winter, thus many fish will swim east past the edge of the Monomoy shoals and the continental slope, into deeper waters there or to places such as the ends of George's Banks, to find a more temperate climate in winter. In spring, they once more rejoin the land of birth at those tepid and sleek tidal waters releasing off of the marshes. Cod, liking less warm waters, then streamed like silver planets off the shores of the Cape all year round. One population of cod swam towards coastal bottoms in warm weather, out to more pelagic locations in the cold, while another population went in the opposite direction. More specifically, some cod of southern New England moved west in winter as far as Nantucket Sound, to swim east and north in May; while northern populations moved offshore in the cold, nearer to shore in the warmth. This made cod available all year round at various distances from shore. At the shallow waters of estuaries and tidal bay mouths, were such fish as white perch, winter flounder, tomcod in the cold months; tautog, summer flounder, in summer. There were elvers in tidal creeks in riverbanks through the year, eels migrating down to the sea in fall; alewives pushing upriver in spring. There were spring and fall runs of herring, of bass; runs of bluefish from May through August. And more.

Indigenous men had fished for subsistence for thousands of years. European man had been cod fishing commercially on their side of the Atlantic for centuries- and coming across the Atlantic to Newfoundland and beyond for the fish since before official New World settlements, as far back as the 1540s. (The 16th Century International Fishery (heritage.nf.ca))

From the beginning of man here, Monomoy reaching into the sea like an extended arm was no doubt a preferred place from which to hang a line. By 1711, Daniel Greenleaf had purchased the rights to a fishing stage at Chatham, most likely off the Point. The town voted his "land, men and boats to be free from rates," in other words free from those taxes on cod, mackerel and herring which went into the coffer to pay for schools and churches. The fishing was likely nearshore, but Monomoy also was a good jumping off ground for those northerly waters which were plundered for cod to trade to the Caribbean.

Cod As Coin

Fish was a literal treasure in silver scales. It was salt cod which, with a bit of mackerel, sturgeon, oysters, whale oil, local hemp, tar, flax, tallow, corn, beef, hides, timber, some grains, was exchanged for southern cotton, hogs, corn, tobacco and flour; exchanged at the West Indies for that barter of molasses, rum, and the sin of slaves; it was cod then which not only fed men, but which, either in its original form, or transposed into other goods, could buy everything valuable, even gold and silver specie. If cod had been the commodity which opened up colonial trade in the West Indies, it later would help to create the wealth for the trade of the Federalist era. In the post-Revolutionary and post War of 1812 reconstructions, although it was often difficult to finance boats for it at first, fishing was once more an easy way to create a kind of currency for world trade: the sale or trade of cod bought objects from the south and beyond, which themselves could be traded in the world.

Throughout much of the whole Gulf of Maine from Stellwagen to the Bay of Fundy and the western Grand Banks, men had gone out from the Cape for handlining cod, as well as for whaling, with varying degrees of political trouble limiting them throughout the wars with Canada. Fishing the north around Newfoundland and Nova Scotia became increasingly popular in the mid-1700s – intensifying after the peace of 1763 was made with Great Britain and Canada – continuing to the Revolution. Until international troubles pushed them away again, men worked handlining cod back on their old grounds, deeded to them by the Treaty of Paris with the English – from the Gulf of Maine to the Bay of Chaleur past Nova Scotia, off Newfoundland at Belle Isle, all the way down to Nantucket, catching 700 quintals of fish a year. (One quintal equaled 88 lbs. of boneless fish.) Five coasters for a time out of Chatham traded the salt-cod to the West Indies. By the Revolution, Chatham had some 30 vessels lining offshore and at the areas around Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, the Belle Isles, venturing towards the eastern Grand Banks, with about 240 men listed as fishers.

After the Revolution, Monomoy became more and more popular as a place to fish, both close to shore as well to launch from, for longer, deeper sea voyages. By the 1800s it was said of Chatham, as of Orleans, that everybody goes to sea except for small boys and old men, who cultivate the ground. (No mention of the women was made.)

Mackerel and the St. George's Banks

The St. George's Bank east of Monomoy was seldom used until politics and dearth pushed us there. Around 1818, cod, which had been overfished not only diminished, but treaties with English Canada resulting from the close of the War of 1812 kept us away from northern stocks on the Grand and other banks. After the Revolt, men given rights to fish in English Canada found that the same trouble between the French and English which resulted in trading difficulties also redounded to the Americans fishing in those waters with one side or another remanding whaling and fishing vessels. Trade in salt fish to the Caribbean being now limited by these conflicts, New England men looked for new areas in which to regain its profits. They began to sell more in Europe and at home. In the 1830s, Canada usurped the West Indian salt-fish market. Europe bought less dried, pickled and salted fish from us. Local coastal markets were intensified. Still more American people ate fish at home. (19th Century Salt Fish Markets, 1793-1850s (heritage.nf.ca))

Men also looked for new areas other than the northern waters in which to fish: The southern areas of the Gulf of Maine, north and west of the Cape, edged down into the northern areas of the fearful George's Bank. Long known for shoals which popped up out of the sea like dragon's teeth, for waters which piled up in huge waves against the shoals, this was not a place to sail into. A shallow dangerous set of waters, bucking up like a roiling dragon, not only did underwater peaks show their heads through it, but it was, like the temperamental Grand Bank(s), beset with storms. Men from Cape Ann had tried it in the 1720s but abandoned it as too dangerous. In 1802 a Captain Western of Duxbury attempted the shoals again. By the 1820s, men returned to dare the St. George's dragons with their sea horses of pinkies and their swords of gaffs and lines - for its new supply of winter cod at its northeast tip, as well as the summer cod which swam around its whole and lured them there.

Not only had men looked for new markets and new grounds for fishes, they had looked for new species consumers would enjoy. Mackerel too swarmed around the George's, even as it did off Cape, off Monomoy. In the 1820s, when the rediscovered underwater sand and gravel hills were more and more used, mackerel would increase in popularity. Just

about concurrent with a fabled peak in abundance of 1831, mackerel had become the Piscean, the "cold-blooded aquatic craniate vertebrate" (Webster's most picturesque dictum), of choice.

Other Fish

Flounder was caught on the George's and near Monomoy, and Monomoyers would also fish for fluke and for various sea basses. Interestingly, the many wrecks off the Moy may have helped shelter the then abundant and now rare black sea bass. Bottom feeding haddock on the George's became ever more popular as well; a prized fish by the 1870s. Eventually, rather late in the 19th century, bluefish became no longer a scruff fish sold for five cents, but a desired delicacy. The latter, along with seabasses, could be fished for from onshore as well, and would become a source of a Monomoy sports fishery.

A Powder Hole Village

Men had often been "corncrackers" who farmed in the summer, then sold their salt cod and corn down south in small boats they owned. (Corncrackers were also defined by *Harwich Men of the Sea* as fishermen who used vessels they own to peddle not only salt fish but corn and salt on short jaunts trading for "yard goods, hardware and other merchandise.") Now the chase of summer mackerel, cold weather cod, allowed men to fish full time. (According to some authors such as Albert Church in American Fisherman, the winter cod men who endured many hardships considered the summer mackerel men to be gentlemen fishers.) Monomoy's proximity to the George's and the mackerel migrations undoubtedly made her a new prime site for habitation; from here one could follow the fish in their migration, follow fishes to their zones of breeding and feeding. Fortuitously, by the 1830s, the harbor which may have begun to do so as early as the War of 1812 had begun to open up on the southwest tip of Monomoy where that topsail schooner allegedly had gone down: Powder Hole was now large and deep. Former habitations for salt hay farmers and ship salvagers saw an influx of men who began to put up shanties on Monomoy in which they might camp out occasionally, or even live for part of the year. (In Chatham, there used to be near Harding's Beach, are a group of tousled, Hansel and Gretelish shacks, places in which to change clothes, stash gear or tools for repair. With their small paned windows, narrow bunk beds, they look very similar to those drawn in an 1875 Harper's Magazine article, showing thin high gables and tiny chimneys, cramped together in an alleyway.)

The shanties soon were relegated to storing barrels, salt, tackle for the returning fishermen, while more "substantial houses" were built for them and their families to live in. By the 1830s there was a hatchling fishing

village at Sandy Point about a mile opposite the new lighthouse. (It was on the southeast, the Atlantic of the tip, while some say the fishermen lived on the west, the Nantucket Sound side.) The place would be named colloquially, Whitewash Village, for the lavish amount of paint used on the abodes circling the Powder Hole. By the 1850s, the cold and storm, heat and salt, would weather the pigment off.

Ships and Fish

In the time of the first lighthouse and the incipient village, Cape men with possible exceptions like Provincetown, were largely Federalist. When Whitewash Village began, they favored the kind of democracy by noblesse oblige which John Quincy Adam's presidency in the 1820s represented: that of government by aristocrats for the good of all. Save in a few places like Provincetown, Capers would not vote for the new kind of populism which Andrew Jackson's democratic party promised, standing for the new "common man," against what appeared to be oligarchical eastern interests. They aligned against the party of Jefferson and Monroe, against the agrarian interests which the locals felt had betrayed their mercantile ones to sell out shipping in the war years. (Jackson may have pretended egalitarianism for white folks, but he was the Cherokee nation's Hitler, as they will tell you.)

Early post-Revolution, federalist Cape Cod global merchantry which had centered in places like Barnstable, Brewster, even Chatham and Provincetown to a degree, had, by the post War of 1812 period of the 1820s, begun to concentrate in Boston and north shore hands. Even if Cape ships were no longer built and financed to sail the world, Cape men by the scores still captained vessels in the foreign trades. And Cape vessels continued to be built and manned and financed for the coastal trades.

In the fifth decade of independence, the 1830s, the Cape still farmed sheep, ran tanneries, manufactured boots, and some salt, even as she sailed and fished ubiquitously, and whaled out of Falmouth and Provincetown for sperm oil and right whale "bone."

During and after 1839-42, the Opium Wars shut down a China angered by the drugging of its people by organized entrepreneurial occidentals out to gain eastern profit. She closed Canton and ousted all western men along with both their religious and material concepts. Cape men who had been in the China trades thought about coasting or fishing again. European tensions eased as the Village began and expanded, so the world markets of Europe and her colonies serendipitously became wider open for trade by the collapse of the China trades. A few towns such as Harwich and Dennis, built and manned their rudders during the reopening Trans-Atlantic trades. Local captains and mariners, especially out of Dennis and

Harwich, Yarmouth, continued to trade to India, Japan, Africa, Europe, South America by sea. The numbers and skill of these men are legendary.

In the 1840s, fish was now well established as a commodity for American consumption. Through Boston or for sale at home, salted, brined or fresh, it created profits. Fish was once again not only an item for trade in itself, but one which, by its wealth transformed into money or goods, could function once more as a kind of specie for the Cape and Monomoy coastal and local trade. "Fish for their dishes will fill up your wishes" might have been the slogan which made not only the cod but perhaps the mackerel as well sacred to Massachusetts and the Cape especially.

By 1837 Powder Hole held 22 fishing boats. In the same year, the St. George's was so popular for fishing off the Cape that, according to the Barnstable Patriot, it was suggested a lighthouse be built upon it. Soon Monomoy would have a temporary school which doubled as a church on Sundays.

The World of the Flats: Shellfish

Before, during and after Whitewash Village, the flats would fill an important need for settlers as they had for Indians. In 1768, Chatham had passed a law that, "Strangers who come for clams should be summarily dealt with." Regarding the Monomoy Great Beach they decreed, "No person shall get their Bate that is on any of the Flats that Belongs to the Town except the Inhabitants and those persons that cure their fish in this place, without paying 3 shillings per Bushells for Pickled Clambs and 2 pence for Bushell of clambs in their shells." Joseph Doane Esq., with two other deputies were to inspect the flats and prosecute for fines if there were any violations. Oystering, too was limited by proclamation.

The rich Nantucket sound would be good habitat for lobsters, not that plentiful offshore apparently. The state had put a lobster hatchery in at Powder Hole. In 1839, from Whitewash Village, lobsters were selling for 2 cents; culls for 1 cent!

Mussels could accumulate on the Nantucket Sound side of Monomoy in the subtidal flats during the warm weather, grow on their byssal threads attached to pilings, wrecks, pebbles, toppling upon each other before winter storms washed most of them out. Too, on the protected west side, scallops could see with their blue eyes (made famous by E. Gibbons), jet propel themselves out of harm's way to tuck into the eelgrass beds which made them comfortable; the same eel grass the Brant geese nibbled. Although oysters did not clump that plenteously on Monomoy as they did in Wellfleet or Cotuit, a few could expand where estuaries were not too cold, not too warm, not too turbulent, aerated enough, salty enough. At the edge

of sandflats, maneuvering up towards the beaches like intergalactic tanks sent to beachhead a new planet, swimming in couples and threesomes at the highest spring tides of May full moons, the horseshoe crab armies came. Not only did they supply millions of eggs to shorebirds, but their shield-like bodies supplied much needed fertilizer to the sandy eroding ground of local farms, so much so that a bounty was placed on them by the 1800s, even as on herring and shad, to limit overuse.

But it was the bivalve clam which received the most rapt attention. Clams dwelt in the various substrata of the flats accorded their species all year, sea clams, cherrystones and littlenecks or bigger and littler quahogs, steamers, razor clams. A lithograph in Ballou's article shows the mud flats of previous years crowded with clammers drinking down, most probably, raw littlenecks. Another one shows them shucking either clams or oysters. Lanky, angular men with rakes and hoes, digging steamers by the bushel basket, out farther with shallow boats and longer rakes, scraping quahogs and sea clams off the bottom, certainly would have been on Monomoy since the beginning. One of the reasons Mattaquason and his kin would have come here is clams. (Shellfish middens all over the Cape show heaps of varied arthropod and bivalve delights.) Clams were used primarily for bait through the 1800s. Herring family fish such as menhaden and shad were also used for bait, as well as for fertilizer. (Incidentally, these fishes were disdained, as salmon had been, unbelievably, by early colonists for food.) Menhaden (pogey) was sought as fish oil lubricant as well. The worms often dug up with clams, as well as common earth worms, would be bait for later surfcasters, as were squid and bullfrog.

The Vilage Grows

By the 1840s there were perhaps as many as 50 dwellings, many "good substantial houses for the more prosperous families beside unpretentious ones for the fishermen. Families lived here year round." There was a Congregational church and a bank and a new lighthouse.

By 1850 a new school was built as a separate building. By 1855 the Monomoy school, now Public School 13, was rebuilt for its rowdy youngsters. (Cape Cod education was being formalized in buildings. Fewer travelling schoolmasters taught wherever a room could be provided for them.) The first president of Tuft's College's son, Giddings Ballou, was the schoolmaster in the 1850s. At this time, you could look out to the newly repainted red lighthouse tower with its black and white lantern cap. In school one boy sat scanning the window for wrecks. Another engaged him in fisticuffs with Ballou. In 1860-1, the group of scholars under Mercy Hammond – Ballou had left – was 16. Monomoians wondered whether to

keep the school open or to send their offspring ashore by dory to learn, as later solitary lightkeeper's sons would do.

There were at least 40 local fishing fleet boats anchored at Powder Hole on the Nantucket Sound side of the place, involved in "an extensive fishing business." There were two wharves owned by the two fishing companies which owned the vessels – along with several "private small wharves." (An invention of the post-Federalist era for the Cape, wharves had been around on the Vineyard since the 1700s but hadn't taken here where people had mostly preferred to just shore-haul and turn over their boats during the offseason).

Monomoy was now an isle of the sunny south: her lighthouse there, her village, her fishers and her wreckers and her marinas. (Even her lifesaving was a matter of the benign middle.) The place catered also to lifesavers, lightship families, lobstermen, as well as to freighter and other sailors and their needs. As many as 200 people may have lived on the isle. With an area around the hole less than two miles wide, it must have been a pretty compressed village, maybe like Provincetown or the Sandy Neck townlet, still extant, with sandy walkways between the houses, maybe some room for a garden. Maybe some lived in shacks around Inward Point and Stewart's Knoll; those men with shallower day tripping fishing dories; maybe weir and lobstermen, clammers. (One wonders where the dead were buried. Probably ashore at Chatham.)

Chandleries

As the village expanded, the fleets of Boston and the north shore, the passing China trades, the world trades, the coastal trades, showed the heightening and climax of sail which would occur through the 1850s. By the 1850s as the Clipper ship helps us internalize, Americanize our trade; though ships still bring hides and ginger from places afar like Calcutta, more vessels head east to Europe, south and west past the Monomoy light, to whale South America, to trade to California to the Pacific. As the decade changes the scent of firewood smoke to one of steam, and industry begins to modernize us, Thoreau speaks of seeing hundreds of sail off the Cape: brigs, and barks, square-riggers, "with their great height and breadth of canvas," and schooners "with many jibs and staysails," and pilot boats signaling larger vessels by gun. Steamers burnt "fat bituminous coal" the streams of which could be seen for "seventy miles." As much difference between the sail craft he said, "as between living creatures."

Because of the Hole's use as a half-way point for ships from Boston on their way out to deep seas, for packets and coasters passing north and south with passengers or cargo as well, the growing hamlet would not only

fish, but repair and outfit ships, cater to transient mariners. Bait, supplies, tackle, were provided from ships' chandleries much like today's marinas. Various outfitters and general supply shops, such as Collins Howe's which had been doing good business since 1839 flourished.

Ships may even have been built here; if not, they were certainly repaired. There were two shipyards which could do repairs. Together the chandlery and repair shops, some of which were owned by the fishing companies, owned their own flakes or cradles from which men worked on vessels which were dry docked, raised up on huge timbers. Ship carpenters would have in the early years been generalists, capable of using adze, mallet, wedge, hammer and caulking point as well as, perhaps, the new steam benders to fix big hulls and little with wood imported from Maine. Caulkers would have to endure the stench of tarry oakum. Cordage, repaired and new, might be coiled up in barrels rounded by local coopers. Sail lofts might exist, huge, dark places, smelly with the oil out of bungholes which they used to repair the duck and canvas; coiling the sails up on eight foot high cylinders.

"In connection with fishing the business had a large general outfitting store supplying their own fleets and selling large quantities of goods to coastwise vessels which frequented the harbor. The coastwise trade between New York and Boston was immense. Steam had not yet driven Coasters from the sea," commented Captain Joseph Reed in an interview in the 1880s.

I am reminded so strongly as I write this of a recurring dream. I am in the attic of an 1830sish building in Manhattan's Chelsea area, the harbor beyond holds many masts, barely visible. Connected by coils are dream and the spoken and written word. One wonders what the splice is between private consciousness and public record, between personal dream, public story.

Worlds of Sands

At the edges of land and sea, in the world of the dunes and sands, the sun allowed the processes of curing fish to take place. Processing of fish in colonial times: First he cleaned them on wooden stages onshore, then he took them to another place where salt was boiled down in big kettles. The fish were rubbed in it; then smoked on wood fires.

In the 1800s, cod was kept fresh on short voyages. It was rubbed down with salt on longer ones until it could be processed ashore. "Scully-joe," that is, cod or small whole flounder, dry-salted rather than brine corned, cured by sun drying, could be eaten without cooking. Salting, so popular ashore, may or may not have held its big low vats on the "Moy." Surely the place needed tons of salt for its fish; if there were no salt vats and windmills to provide the water to be evaporated, and drawings, descriptions of the time

do not show them, then it must have been barged in from shore on heavy, two-masted schooners. On the mainland in Chatham 27,000 pounds of salt worth $8,220 were transported in 1837; there were 44 big "turtle-backed" salt evaporating vats in 1840; in the 1850s, 14. By 1856 the vats, which could cover an area big as a garden or many acres, were being broken up, as Long Island outcompeted the Cape. Some of the six windmills which had been built along Stage and Old Harbors were being dismantled. However they got their salt, and whether fish was salted off shore or on shore (not only was there beach and dune where houses were laid to store men), here was plenty of sunshine and beach for sun drying dry salted or brine-cured fish. Monomoy fleet and wharf and chandlery owners also put up "yards of flakes to cure fish." The platforms, trays, racks and stages on which fish was salted and dried were supposed to have been everywhere.

There may even have been a bowling alley. The place had character. Next to a group of fish flakes and packing sheds was the "Monomoy House" which harbored the shipwrecked, the salvaged, the captains and fishers, transient salts and jacks from all manner of sea ventures, including now, at the height of this place, those who had been on the clipper ships which rounded the Horn up to California for their decade of glory. These were roughly housed on the second floor, above a first floor filled with fishing tackle, boat repairing; "a fisherman and coasters' fitting-store on the first floor" and a kind of meeting room filled with tall tales and smoke. Schoolmaster Ballou wrote, "Everybody talks ship at Monomoy." Around the cast iron stove at Monomoit House (sometimes spelled that way, too), sitting on the long bench or in the "at once sitting room, dining room and kitchen, listening while he toasted his thin legs, to many a tale of adventure in seas of the Old World, or in Pacific whale-ships, or amidst the semi-piratical resorts of the Gulf or Spanish Main, the wreck fire meanwhile sputtering blue or yellow, or flaming spitefully as though infested with troublesome ghosts of Malay, Portuguee or Buccaneer. Meanwhile the unctuous sea-fowl gave odorous smoke beside the fuming tea-pot on the supper table, and there was genial comfort within, though the blinding storm howled against the windowpanes and cased them thick with snow." He added, "The winter fires of Monomoy burn with strange hues from black wreck-wood seasoned in many climes, and the family wood pile takes its sole supply from frames bound with snug jointings, bolts, spikes and tree-nails, and torn apart by crow-bar and levers of curious designs." A litho of an upturned wreck is entitled, "Family Woodpile." He further states there is: "Plenty of sea-room... and no neighbor sticking his pig sty under your bedroom window that he might squeeze out a bit of garden by its side."

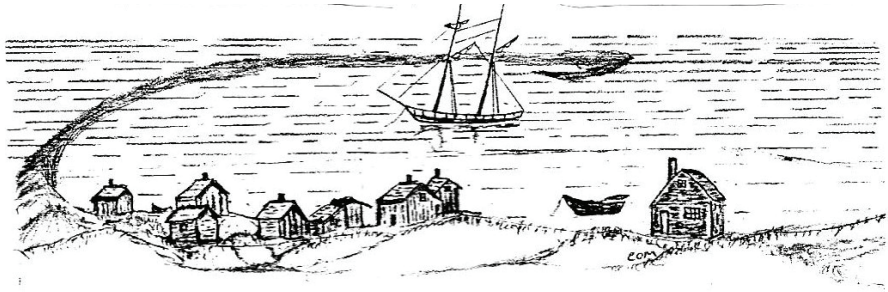
Was it a friendly group as with today? Around harbors, as around some

of the last fishing islands off the Cape and Maine, the people who work there tend to know one another, form a tightknit community of fisherfolk, mechanics, provisioners, sellers, each with its own "team" affiliations; exchanging some information, protecting others as secret. Did anyone sneak off to build a house at a distance, in a more private place, knowing they could return to the brotherhood, of let's say, fishermen; a brotherhood based on the day to day repetition of acts which brought danger and payment in coin from the catch? Did the sea extend people's inward ability to find distance and solitude within? In spite of a small village without? Did the occasional monotony of doing the same task of fishing over and again, as Thoreau suggested, limit and dull people? Surely far less than doing redundant tasks without nature as a daily challenger would.

At the edge of the world down here at the Village, on a clattery board pier neither of land nor sea, you might walk high up to a higher walkway, maybe a rope one, where sails were kept, looking out to the water. Maybe you'd hang your square lantern outside the door, light it; go alone to a distant shack in the dunes and look out to shushing ocean, the vast private solitude of a newly unfurling night.

Your rifle by your hearth, if you were hungry: there were gull eggs on the dunes; shorebirds in season on the flats; curlews on the marshes; ducks in the holes, some freshwater bass; clams down at the tides.

You could look down from the flats of the north to the dunes of the middle, to home; beyond to the stretches of heather on the back dunes, the thickets around the ponds; the little clefts of sedges and cattails and grasses.



18

Fleets and Weirs

Monomoy Owners

In 1842 the salty Captain Reed made the fortune which allowed him to buy land and to finance some of the local village fishing fleets. He bought up 200 barrels of offshore netted shad and resold it at a very good profit as bait to fishermen from Cape Ann. The next year nets filled the shore to repeat his coup. They say shad was so overhauled in these few years, little of it appeared for about 30 years after that. That shrewd dealer Reed, in 1848, hired a Connecticut man to set up the first weir to trap mackerel off Monomoy. (Some of the first weirs had been set up at Long Island perhaps by Connecticut people.) This practice too, netted him a gold-like profit, ironically, in the very first year of the Gold Rush. Reed increased his fishing boats through the 1840s and 50s, particularly 1842-47, buying 20 boats in about 1843, financing more new vessels after 1848.

According to the notes and records kept by Eleanor Henderson, past president of the Chatham Historical Society, David Bearse had owned about four fifths of the Great Beach, bought out from various Sears and Taylors. He had a store, a marine railway, warehouses on the shore front and a wharf on the beach. He and his sons shared in operation of the store. Captain Joseph Reed, with Captain Isaiah Lewis and partner Thomas Sparrow, wanted pieces of the island for their small new fishing fleet, fleet-related chandleries and other businesses. (Lewis and Sparrow remained mainlanders who visited to oversee their holdings, while Reed may well have lived on the isle. Little is known of them. Neither is it known whether the captains Reed and Lewis had been masters of coasting or fishing vessels or of larger ships sailing foreign waters.) Bearse rented out his property to them for very high rates which he upped after Reed made a killing in shad. Finally, Reed et al bought land from store owner Collins Howes, faking out the canny Bearse. When David Bearse died the year after Reed's financial success, in 1849, he "had a large Notes Receivable list in his Probate from fishermen, had fishing shanties on the beach, like H. Stanley Bishop has

his boats." Joshua Young Bearse bought out other brothers. Of his sons in turn, Admiral Joshua Bearse Jr. sold land to William Bloomer for 150 dollars. Bloomer was allowed to improve it and the building on it, which later became an inn. The Coastguard would buy from the Bearse sons to build Monomoy Point life station. Weir companies would lease from them.

In spring of 1847, Reed's burgeoning fishing company "had a vessel that needed sheathing and sent for Timothy Loveland and Anthony Thacher to do the job." These shipwrights who had been building in Harwich and continued to do so joined in a loose partnership with Reed, Sparrow and Lewis. They had already invested in Monomoy. In the early 1840s, Anthony Tha(t)cher, Josiah Hardy, Timothy V. Loveland with his brother Isaac Loveland who had been a cooper, also had leased a part of the beach from David Bearse at $85 a year to maintain weirs and traps. Although they would be partners in the fleets for about five years, they would split up with Reed over weiring. In 1854, Loveland and Thacher put up new stakes in the shallow west waters of the south, strung them with nets. It cost $2500. Captain Reed sued them, wanting exclusive rights: "Some of the weir companies have taken legal action with a view to restrain others from setting weirs near the grounds which they have occupies and held for years by a permit. The matter was settled in court in Boston in favor of the defendants."

In the 1850s, with Isaac Loveland, the rivals of Reed, that is, Anthony Thacher and Timothy Loveland, incorporated the Loveland and Thacher Company, which also "carried on an extensive fishing business here," undoubtedly building new vessels or buying them to go with their wharves and chandlery. How many vessels they bought or built, and when, seems to be unknown.

The two new piers built on the Powder Hole were owned, one, by Captain Reed with Isaiah Lewis and Myrick Kent, another, by partners Anthony Tha(t)cher with Timothy and Isaac Loveland and Daniel Webster Nickerson.

Monomoy Fishers

The reaction to recent past royalty was a mistrust of overt accumulation of status, if not of wealth per se. The idea of painting blue your dealwood parlor, setting out a wing chair and silver candelabras, aside from their function and aesthetic appeal, was to show that a nation of men, independent, could do well enough. For some, the title squire still held on for many years after the Revolution as conspicuous accumulation became an addiction. Although towns had their "squires," the weight of the titles had been dispelled after the War for Independence.

Cape fleets since earliest times were corporately owned in common by

local capitalists and fishermen "on their hook" on a share's basis. (This term derived from the fact that fishers brought their own gear. Also, that they had, in the colonial years, counted their profits by the amount of cod tongues they placed on special hooks). Owners put in supplies, food and repairs. Fishermen brought their own gear; profits were split along equable lines. The usual split was one third of the profit to fishers to pay for nets and lines. Often bought from their owners' supply shops, occasionally Cape men "owed their soul to the company store." Usually, it was a satisfactory deal.

Camaraderie, rather than rivalry, lay with men of like occupations, fisher, farmers et al. The Indian tribesmen might have identified in a sense with the cooperation shown from the age of farmers to that of fishers. Individual families began to dig for profit when farming changed from what was sustainable for your family, to what was for sale and could produce commodities. When the practice and the ethos changed, this put a dent in cooperativeness. But even if town pasture was no more held in common, the sea was shared. Fishermen were often a cultural sect of their own, as farmers had been before them, developing their own personas out of a brotherhood which enjoyed terrible dangers and gained its self-assuredness together. The courageous, egalitarian spirit with which Indians of the past might have identified (even if they could not have identified with their pragmatism, unsupported by a spirit vision or intellectual quest) perhaps grew out of the spotty abundance of profitable quarry in a risky endeavor. Perhaps it grew out of the clan relatedness of many Capers. One in five families in Chatham were kin to one another in the early years. In the 1830s, although immigration began its increase of the importation of strangers, the bond of blood made cooperation a feature of Monomoy life.

Ultimately, Cape men, particularly of the outer Cape, seemed to covet independence more than wealth; that is, if they could farm and fish enough to own their own small boat, their own piece of sand, it was enough. There was no need for the majority to empire-build. Banks were unions, town cooperatives, occasionally so generous in their lending that one or two went bust by the late 1800s. Often local money men like Dennis's Christopher Hall and Prince Crowell, having first made small fortunes from fishing or coasting or even whaling, themselves, then built vessels in which their friends and relatives who captained and manned them, shared a piece of the action.

Monomoy Fleets?

Technology intersects with nature to produce invention, even as nature intersects with culture to produce history. The fish themselves motivated invention's changes: Cod lurks about near the bottom, available in different

populations throughout the year, spawning in cold weather farther out to sea. Mackerel is an elusive fish, swimming near the surface, sometimes in great schools; sometimes disappearing. Like cod, it migrates, but its journeys are more epic, and it is far more seasonal; assembling in hordes in fall and spring, leaving for the winter. Mackerel may be more coastal, cod deeper out and down.

Monomoy is a border line for more southerly and more northerly fish. They meet here, passing close by on migrations out to the Mid Atlantic Bight to the southeast and from the Gulf of Maine to the northeast.

Shoals create needs for shallower or "shoaler" vessels: fishing the various offshore banks is different than fishing open water. Fishing the George's is different than fishing the Grand Banks. Fishing for fish to sell fresh is different than fishing for salted fish. Each technique, area, type of fish and market produces its own vessel: Whilst some boats worked like terns or gannets, allowing the bait to dive deep, hovering to wait for it to be caught, others worked like skimmers, dashing over the waters, scooping up surface fish. What they sought to fish determined what they might carry as equipment, and where. This might determine how long they were floating homes to men and these combined factors also helped determined designs of these floating fishing tools with sails, their bodies sharper, rounder or squared. Just as we can tell makes of cars today, people could tell which vessel what by their sail rig did, the cut of their prow, the detail painted on their sterns.

It was likely that the growing Monomoy fleets were as advanced as could be, using new designs combined with new methods to take new fish on new grounds. Monomoy was not only the scene of invention, mariner firsts, nearer to the George's and to its cod and mackerel than any other place on the Cape, but its own waters were shaved thin and shallow. On one side was Nantucket Sound, on the other the Atlantic. Thus, the Reed and Loveland Powder Hole fleets may have been special, recognizable. But withal, their Monomyish traits would have been tempered by the available designs evolved of the times.

Methods of Fishing

There were different methods for different fish. Handlines off vessels were set from time immemorial. Netting fishes in various ways including gill and haul seine netting from shore, is also as ancient as fisheries. These fish catching means have been adapted in different ways since the advent of sail.

Handlining and Trolling

"Drailing" or trailing (trolling) that had, since at least 1812, been conducted by means of outrigged lines set and dragged by the vessel came

into use for mackerel.

At least by 1820, mackerel handlining or jigging was done by a hook hidden in a plummet, at first baited. Soon no bait was added on the hooks; instead "tolling," that is, chumming, the waters with freshly cut bait fish was practiced. Hand mills ground out the bait for the chum. S.E. Morison tells of a Cape joke – wives putting their husbands to sleep by the sound of the grinding of the next day's bait, but some off-color allusion is obviously missing. Interestingly the chum from mackerel fishers fed the fish, keeping them fat for the market, according to Shebnah Rich writing in 1875. When mackerel was no longer "fed," it became bony, thin and undesirable. (Gaffing or taking mackerel with a spear and hook was practiced, too, but frowned upon as scaring the swift and shy fish.)

In 1842, according to Rich, 30 barrels of mackerel were taken in 20 minutes on the Banks by hook and line. The sides of the boats looked like silver, he said. (By a February report the United States Fisheries made in 1839, it was found that handlining could also catch halibut if the line were set at three or four fathoms.)

Drag Seining

By 1838-1841, gillnetting with haul-seining for mackerel nearshore was in vogue. (We think of these as two different methods, gill nets set from boats and harvested, or haul seines set from land. Later gillnets would be floated by cork and then glass, and set as drift or still nets, in place. This became popular in the 1850s-60s for Americans, though it had been in use from time immemorial for indigenous people.) This combined means may have ceased during the 18th century as a fairly common practice from the century before, to reappear reinvented once more as mackerel increased in popularity. It involved the towing of a net behind the boat which would catch fish, pulling them near to be scooped aboard. Some of the first catboats, such as Beetle's sail-carrying longboats (designed in the 1830s), single-masted, oddly shaped Noman's Land boats developed for Nantucket Sound, may have drag-seined as well as handlined the shallow waters and deep "holes" off both sides of the Moy, especially during migrations in spring and fall. Captain N.E. Atwood of Provincetown, stated in *The Fisheries and Fishing Industries of the United States*, by G. Brown Goode (a seven-volume endeavor of the 19th century) that he went to Chatham in 1841 to fish for shad. The Chatham boats dragged nets adrift through the night.

Purse Seines

July 21, 1839 (not 1859 as is occasionally reported; that date is for the first spring seine) Captain Isaiah Baker, son in law of Dennis/Harwich

ship builder-owner Job Chase, set the first purse seine for shad around Monomoy. Some say it was invented in Rhode Island and that Baker was merely the first to set it at the Cape. Soon the Yarmouth Register would report he was taking 60 barrels at a "shoot" of mackerel with his "Cape Cod ingenuity." (I can find no mention of a patent for his invention. In the Commissioner of Fisheries reports, patents are taken for a school of fishing inventions, even a seine, probably a shallow drag seine, in 1814, well before Baker. There are patents on reels, hooks, trolls, traps, means of refrigerating, etc.) At first it seems, the seines were set from dories and pinks, or from small lapstrake whalers, low to the water, small enough for a single crew to handle. Then it may be that experiments in group retrieval were practiced, which led to the later carrying of dories aboard.

Although purse seining did jump in popularity around Chatham and Harwich on the Cape, most sources say that it did not become popular on offshore, larger schooners until well after the Civil War, becoming slowly a new way to catch fish, suffering the usual wait of about 20 years between invention and accepted application. What is known is that ships found dories difficult to set seines from, using longer whaleboats at first; they would eventually need to carry a few 27' to 30' long boats to best be able to carry them. These required vessels too large for Monomoy harbors' capacities.

At least one source, *The George's Banks*, says that purse seining was used on those banks, done from whaleboats stowed aboard mackerel vessels by the mid-1850s, around the time that drag gill netting became popular there. Some sources say that while seining was indeed practiced on the banks, dory fishing of handline and line trawl, while practiced elsewhere, was in fact avoided on the George's until the 1860s.

An 1892 report in Public Documents of Massachusetts mentions, gill and sweep nets owned by Chathamites, pounds and weirs, catching shad, sea herring striped bass, alewives, menhaden, scup.

(Notably of fish weirs now off Chatham in Nantucket Sound there is only one licensed multigenerational family of Eldredges taking scup, black sea bass, mackerel, bluefish, butterfish, bonita, false albacore, herring, squid and Spanish mackerel.)

Set out a 200 fathom (1200 foot) circle of a net marked by buoyed corks, which can be at eight feet depths, or by weights cast farther down; set it out of a mother long boat to pick up later with the help of many boats and bring to the captain and men on board who will scoop the squirming treasure out with dip nets.

I dream and wake in it, shallow water swirling beneath my small boat as I set the seine with the help of six friends in other boats. We sit, handlining in the warm spring air as the seine fills with fish. We pull the rope to close it and

scoop the catch into our boats. I pack the new net into my boat, leave for home.

Mackerel schools about at the surface, while cod lingers much lower down on the bottom. Mackerel comes into the net, while we handline for cod below.

Line Trawling

By around 1843, possibly as early as 1839, long lining, also known as line trawling then, was introduced. Described as setting "1000 baited hooks, left buoyed by cocks," these were many hooks strung from lines attached to a very long line, sometimes from rope bags adorned with hooks hung from the line. It had been introduced by French Canadians at the Grand Banks and it caught on eventually with Americans as a new way to catch cod with the hooks sunk from dories at some "26 to 70 fathoms," for those bottom fish. As with mackerel, waters were profusely chummed. This was also known as "gigging." (Sometimes gaffing a fish was called gigging, too!)

The Chatham Historical Society notes, "Fishermen would have these wooden "trawl" tubs (they looked like cooper's barrels) sitting on the back of their boats, or in dories. Setting out to sea, they would coil up to 300 ft (92 meters) of hooked trawl line in these tubs and uncoil the baited hooks from the trawl tubs onto the seafloor as the tide turned, then haul them back to catch cod and haddock. Then it was a quick turnaround back to the dock to unload the fish, repair the broken hooks, and rebait the line. It was backbreaking work, and very dangerous in bad weather."

(The kind of trawling we think of the so-called otter trawl with a conical set line sunk down to various levels, as well as other trawling net methods, would come in well after the 1850s and take over two decades to come into widespread use.)

By 1855, longlining (line trawling) from dories set down from the mother vessel began to be used on the reopened Grand and other northern Banks. The development of dory lining is foggy, but it is said that by the 1850s mackerel vessels carried dories to line from inside harbors. However, it developed, soon after 1855, long lining from the dories for cod would be the preferred method of catch within 10 years of its inception, while simple handlining on the Banks was relegated to smaller, non-dory carrying boats. The little dory boats were small, about 12'-20' and stackable; carrying up to 1700 lbs. of fish in later years.

Boat Styles: Heeltappers

Colonial fishing implements from Europe were eel spears, shaped like Neptune's tridents, lines and hooks, herring nets, drag seines for herring and mackerel, bass nets, squid lines, eel pots, and coils of rope and cable afixed with sinkers and heavy hooked "drails." From the Indians, settlers probably learned to scoop net fish, to build elaborate weirs at estuary and

bay mouths with wooden sticks made into palisades. Isaack de Rasieres describes an Indian drag net in use in 1628 for shad. Seining rights were assigned by the General Court to English settlers as early as the 1600s. Through the 1700s, these shallow shoreline nets, tidal weirs and handlines were used. The vessels handling them had not changed much until the 1700s, usually consisting of dumpy ketches and shallops.

In the pre-Revolutionary years at least 600 ships, probably ketches, went from New England to fish the Grand Banks of northern Canada by the time King William's War decimated them in 1697. Later, high backed, square-sterned schooners, "heeltappers," went to the banks to fish for salt-cod. These particular boot-like vessels dated from about 1740 but they may have sailed as early as 1713. The schooner was allegedly invented around 1715 by Captain Andrew Robinson, evolving from prior sloops, which themselves were outgrowths of shallops and other lugger vessels.

After the Revolt, at first lack of funds to build large new vessels gave rise to a small craft popular through the early 1800s: the red marked, sloop-rigged Chebacco, described as double-ended by Samuel Eliot Morison, and often called "rams heads," usually no more than 20 tons or so. These could fish nearshore, while out of Old Harbor, 25 of the 70-ton old heeltapper schooners were revived.

By the end of the War of 1812, during which they had been used to ravage English privateers twice their size, there sailed "pinkeys, pinks, pinkies," (the word allegedly derived from "pinched"). Described by some as having a "high narrow stern and bluff apple bow," these vessels whose narrow sterns protected the helmsman from highs seas had changing bow shapes - rounded, wedge-shaped and later, pinked. They were descended from English hoys, small sea going vessels around since the late Middle Ages, as well as from their smaller kin, the Chebaccoes. The tubby, broad-beamed, gaff-rigged schooners were about 20-30 feet at first and would later grow to no more than 55 feet. Said to ride like a duck, pinkies were all around jobbers, good for going anywhere, especially to the newly dared George's Banks. They were an appealing little boat, with a white stripe high on the hull, the long beam of the aft mast setting out behind the stern.

Saltbankers And Smacks

As the popularity of mackerel rose through the 1820s, along with the difficulties in fishing the Canadian Banks for cod, and with the opening of George's, new kinds of vessels evolved, sailing past whalemen and three-mastered vessels to find cod swiftly and unnoticed on the outer banks of Canada, to follow coastal mackerel, and to suit the "loose quicksand" which shifted position so quickly under the currents and shallow waters of the

George's. Through the 1830s, some old Chebaccoes with a sharp stern and a round bow, and some curve-bowed, square-sterned Chebaccoes, called "dogbodies," still sailed to jig for fish along with the pinkies. These may have docked with small, single-masted, lapstrake whaleboat sloops of 30 feet or so.

The old Chebaccoes and pinkies (mostly distinguished from each other by different rigging) became relegated to nearshore daytrips, although some larger pinkies sought the prey of the George's by hand lining until the 1850s. Long a favorite they remained in use for fishing because "their peculiarity of design enabled them to ride out the seas on the fishing ground. Floating like a duck, there was never a storm they could not weather."

The 1830s introduced to sail for mackerel as well as cod offshore at the banks from the George's to Canada, two kinds of vessels, the "saltbanker" and the "well smack." Well smacks held fresh water to keep the fish. Some well smacks' holds kept salt; these were salt bankers. Each with slightly different hull designs, these schooners looked like the old heeltappers because they resembled the rectangular schooners of the past except that their quarterdecks were low. The new boats were designed to anchor on the George's, a feat the pinkies found difficult. Both fresh fish and salt fish boats were about 50 tons, 59'-foot, pinky rigged (gaff rigged and two masted) vessels, carrying a yawl boat.

Bankers which worked not only the George's but other of those underwater hills where fish gathered such as the Browns, Sable and Magdalen continued with the pinkies to be known also as "jiggers," because cod was fished for as it had been since the beginning, by handlining in jerky motions with two strong hooks covered with shucked clams for bait and by sinker weights sunk to the bottom where cod dwell.

1843 Fleets

Around the Moy, pinkies with Chebaccoes were probably owned by small groups of men, and they probably still fished by handlining for closer coastal fish. The Reed fleets of 1843 on Monomoy were probably smacks and bankers still cast in the heeltapper mold, with perhaps a newer heavier hull, and slightly more tonnage. But with all the changes which had occurred in technique, were they designed for multi-purpose uses: to carry salt or water, to fish for cod or mackerel year-round, offshore, drag seining or handlining, from Monomoy to the George's Bank and beyond? Did they carry the new longlines? Was it the Baker seine which Reed set around Monomoy, now used aboard new vessels? Were they simply used to set the weirs?

Sharpies And Romps

In 1838 alone, 78 men had gone down from the Cape in fishing boats, particularly unweatherly saltbankers on the George's. In 1841 the

disastrous Minot storm took the lives of many Truro men there, choked by waters rushing their tippy boats. If the heeltapper bankers and smacks were too vulnerable, they needed to be redesigned to withstand storms.

Chatham built 5 ships in 1845, were they in the old heelptapper mode, pinked, or newer dogbody?

But by 1847, the streamlined Romp type schooners, shallower hulled, with a narrower, squared stern above a flared heel and a flared sharp and narrow bow were on the market. This advanced design of schooners based on the lines of fast, nimble pilot vessels were also called sharpies. Although not expected to, they withstood storms well. These "cod's head, mackerel tail" vessels (which pinkies were also colloquially sometimes called!) 60 to 70 feet and light, 40 to 50 tons let men handline over the side. They held an easy to stow yawl boat at the stern. There were also very sharp versions of these "filebottom" boats, "sharpshooters" designed to avoid the Canadian fish patrol where we were unwelcome, and to move quickly to market. Romp style schooners often fished the George's Banks and fished for mackerel handlining off the sides of the vessel.

Saltbankers in the old mold plied the northern waters off Canada's three-mile limit, too, still unable to take mackerel which swam closer to shore; unable to "make" their cod on Canadian shores as they once did due to politics. This would lead to the increasing rise of drying facilities at places like Monomoy, as well as the use of more salt and brine right on board bigger Bankers.

There was another use for sharpies. By the 1840s the old well smacks had their holds filled with ice as an experiment. By the 1850s ice was big cargo around the world after the discovery by a Brewster man that it could be housed and freighted. Ice would be used to keep fish fresh before unloading it to freighters which could take it to market in the cities. These market boats would also transport herring and "pogy" out to other waiting buy boats which would sell them from ports as bait fish. The freighters, buy boats, market vessels had to be fast sailing. Many were designed as Romp type vessels.

When Reed increased his Monomoy fleet in around 1848-49, likely they were sharp Romps, perhaps the very mackerel boats which handlined off the vessel by the hundreds off Monomoy, while well smacks fished the local banks such as Pollock, the South Cape banks, the Nantucket shoals, in fall, winter and spring. (In 1866 a map shows "Romp Hole" enticingly tucked behind Shooter's Island and behind a dangling appendage now named Inward Point which dwelt above Wreck Cove. Did this suggest that the Romps had fished or harbored here until the Civil War, and perhaps beyond?) The years of the fleet additions were those named the "Chatham

Years," so great were mackerel numbers taken then nearby.

Howard Chappelle, an authority on sailing craft, shows that Romps built at Essex, Massachusetts were adapted for new special, sturdy Georgesmen vessels. Were Joseph Reed's new Romps fishing the George's Banks' western side, jigging for mackerel in the summer; handlining on its eastern side for cod in the winter? Maybe the vessels were equipped to carry either water or salt. Perhaps the fleet owned some market vessels specially designed to carry ice to take the caught fish off to market.

Were there Monomoy, Romp-style Georgesmen equipped with experimental purse seines? Did they stow dories or whale boats to set long lines or seines, or both?

Clipper-Schooners: Mid-1850s, On

In the past it was salt cod, salted roe, pickled and salted mackerel, smoked herring which were favored fishes. By the midst of the 1850s, about half the boats might be fresh fish boats, while the rest still salted theirs. Cod had been sold for a long time both fresh and salted. Mackerel had been preferred salted, but by the 1850s, perhaps half of it was sold as fresh fish. Pollock, hake, haddock, halibut (a Gloucester specialty), swordfish speared off George's were enjoyed fresh now, as well as occasionally salted in various ways.

The increasing popularity of fresh fish and of mackerel, along with the aforesaid technical and political changes, contributed to the creation of a new kind of vessel, as did changes in global vessels' designs. Three masted clipper ships hasted through our waters to the west Coast from the late 1840s through the 1850s as they would for little more than a decade more. The Shiverick Shipyards, operating out of East Dennis's Sesuit harbor, would compete with the best, sending out famous small clippers, such as the Belle of the West around the world. Local captains from the Cape would make world records racing Boston built, Essex or San Francisco owned clippers around the Horn. The square riggers' swiftness, as those of others starting with the earlier "Baltimore" clippers, would entice designers to adopt some of the long-prowed, lean lined, raked stern qualities into smaller fore and aft rigged vessels. The design principles of the past, in such as the stunning schooner-yacht of 1851, the America, were now reversed: she was pinked, flared at the stern, narrow at the front, just like the new models of clipper-like pilot boats she emulated.

A new kind of fishing boat, merging big clipper lines with those of the small pilot boat, would be invented, creating the clipper-schooner. By the mid to late 1850s, clipper fishing boats grew to 65 feet and as many or more tons.

Fleets of the late 1850s were divided into different uses. The different uses created differently designed vessels: Market boats carrying ice would

combine clipper and sharpie features. By this time the half Romp, half clipper Georgesman was "larger, and less sharp than the market boats." It mackerel fished in summer, cod fished winter.

The Grand saltbanker, seeking its cod up north, slightly larger in length and tonnage, was, by the 1850s, a modified heeltapper clipper, a bit more balanced amidships, its stern deeper, flared into a "U" shape, its head shorter than more extreme clipper-schooners.

By the mid-1850s, there was yet another clipper; a lean, long, shallow thing, beautiful but dangerous. Originally developed as Chesapeake Bay boats with some of the first centerboards, they became used to carry oysters in winter from the Cape to New York, to day fish mackerel in summer. Versions of these shallow, sharp vessels would also become the Gloucester fishing boat. Very likely fishing out of the Moy were these intensely black hulled, specially decorated clipper-schooners, lofty with sail, swift, light which Thoreau describes going out in "cities" off Chatham and Truro in 1857. They circled, do-si-doing with each other in the brisk winds (themselves called "mackerel breezes.") Joseph Collins, writing in the late 1800s, says the day trippers fished with hand lines out at an acute angle. Thoreau also speaks of going out on a 43-ton schooner with four dories and seven men off Clark's Island, Plymouth to handline mackerel. He found the weeklong trip boring, the stock of potatoes dull to eat, the tasks of the fishers insufferably redundant.

Fleets of 1855

In 1855, Chatham built 15 new schooners. Had the Moy fleets added clipper-schooners to their ranks? Were the vessels generalists able to change their rigging and methods of fishing according to the prey, or were they individuated for their tasks? Did they go to the northern banks or stay to the George's? Did they fish offshore or inshore, salt their catch or go for fresh fish? Chances are that Reed kept his Romp fleets in service from the 1840s, adding appropriate new ones as inventions changed. Chances are they still fished inshore and offshore to the George's, heading to Stellwagen, the Gulf of Maine, and south to Nantucket Sound and beyond as fish migrations beckoned. Maybe Reed's rivals, Loveland and Thacher, added the clipper-schooner vessels, some for Georgesmen, some for mackerel saltbankers travelling down the southeast coast from the Moy; chances are some new saltbankers did go to the Grand Banks. Mixed with the deep-sea sails and the near shore small craft, were there those new bay boats which redesigned the old sharpies' world of mackerel day tripping?

By 1858, small catboats set the first pound nets (slightly different than the old weirs), beginning a practice which the Monomoy catboats would

follow for decades, sharing the work and the take.

By the 1860s, 70-foot, higher tonnage schooners had started to sail. The clipper-schooners of all kinds were still a vessel with a fairly narrow bow, raked masts. High with sail. The "broad and heavy flat counters" gave the stern "heel" a "boxy" or elliptical look, until the very late 1800s.

Though many of the clipper-schooners would be less stable than the Romps, losing, once again, many a man to the seas, by the 1860s when Whitewash Village would close, the new Georgesmen would become a less sharp, bigger, clipper-schooner. It would keep many of its old lines, increasing in length and tonnage from 60 feet to 65 or 70 feet and as many tons. Next were the "clipper bankers" which were even less sharp than the Georgesman. These saltbankers and smacks carrying ice instead of salt or water in their holds, which sought mackerel and cod at the banks north and south of the Cape, were so similar to the Georgesman in appearance that only subtleties of draft and beam divided the two makes. What the design differences allowed them to carry in nets, lines, stowed boats is difficult to say. While the Georgesman and the other bankers would stay smaller, the new Grand Banker would expand to 80 feet and more.

About these various models of working sail: "This distinction of vessels would last until the 1880s," says Chapelle. But no two sources speak the same of these ships and their methods. The information is scanty, as if everyone took fishing so for granted that nothing need be recorded for posterity. Sorting out what is in the record is a bit like untying a badly knotted fishing line.

At least by the 1870s, vessels seem to have been adapted, especially at their sterns, to fit seines or longlines, with those carrying long boats and nets, flared and curved at their stern a bit more than those stowing dories. (By the 1870s or so, a special George's longline would be invented, cast off the vessel herself.) Hookers who used both longlining and handlining, long argued with seiners, on whose technique was best. Some old mackerel men said that hooking brought them more money, it took fewer men and less equipment because only four dories with a two-man crew apiece could set a line. Netting needed many men, and it became more corporate and took more of the profits away by subdivisions. But seine setting could be done fairly quickly, with less risk than the longer process of dory lining. Setting, returning, picking up might be safer than sitting on exposed seas, line fishing while you waited for the trawls to fill. Often the dories would lose their mother vessels on the foul-weathered banks. But so seaworthy they were, according to the man who owned this one, that the bigger ship was more likely to founder whilst the little tubby cub would bob about safely.

What we know is that the new ships were too large for Monomoy, too

deep in draw, too long from stem to stern. These Gloucester type vessels had to harbor at the north shore or Provincetown Harbor. Yet by the time the old Romps would be outmoded in the 1860s, until even after the village was shut perhaps, it was still said that, "Mackerel fishing takes the lead. Monomoy Point, which lies about 9 miles distant from the Old Harbor lighthouse, nearly south, and on the end of which is also a lighthouse, is a place of great industry in the season for fishing; and the facilities provided there for curing and packing make it the resort of those engaged in the business from the neighboring towns."

Were Fleets Built On Monomoy?

Though there were fleets owned by Monomoy men, where they were built is not known. They may have been built locally on the mid-Cape from Dennis to Harwich and Chatham by shipbuilder/owners Joseph Loveland and Anthony Thacher, or Job Chase's men; or maybe they were imported from Beverly or Gloucester. (Nearby Kingston and Duxbury tended to build larger vessels.)

Ships were created (and repaired) by complex methods of forming (moulding): creating first a model, putting up timber supports; assembling dowels, then the ribs of the hull; bolting frames to them; laying on small pieces of planking to fit the curves of the hull. Then decking was added along with spars and masts. After the advent of the clipper, carpenters became more specialized. There were joiners, plankers, caulkers, spar-makers and so forth.

To curve the wood – cutting it in a certain way was a method, or "oak knees" might rest in water to become more pliable. Around the 1850s came the first use of steam (and of steam rooms which seemed to catch on fire in the early days) to power bandsaws, winches, windlasses and radical new benders to steam planks into shape. By 1853 the East Dennis Shivericks had a steaming plant at their yard with specialists such as blacksmith, joiner, caulker. By 1870, W. Rowe recalls the first use of the steam bender in Yarmouth.

Did the usual 20 year wait between inception of invention and acceptance apply on the Moy? Perhaps only hand methods were used. Surely there would have been blacksmiths with their bellows. Perhaps some were trying out the steam-bellows which would forerun blast furnaces. They would forge out chains, repair anchors. There would be block makers, tackle makers, along with the repairmen of the chandleries.

Where to Fish: Inshore, Offshore and the Banks

As fishes moved inshore or off, winter or spring they invited a division of larger and smaller vessels after them. The men tried to follow the Pisceans

to the niches of their migrations. There were inshore or nearshore men who fished the coasts, and offshore men who went out for the longer deep-sea voyages, sometimes to the banks. In general, smaller vessels remained inshore, seen close to Monomoy's east and western flanks, and in the Sound, while bigger schooners dipped into the Atlantic off Monomoy shoals and beyond.

Cod, abounding from Cape Cod Bay, the Atlantic and the Sound, was handlined from near shore in those days all year round, and especially in warm weather by the smaller craft.

The boats of the Moy fleets, of all sizes, belonged more to the George's Banks and the south Cape area extending to the Elizabeths and off to the big islands of the Vineyard and Nantucket than to Cape Cod Bay and the Gulf of Maine. The nearshore men sailed the local Pollock Rip grounds, Crab ledges, Nantucket and Vineyard shoals, and South Cape. Monomoy boats, small and large alike, may have preferred to stay closer to Stellwagen (Middle Bank) and the more southerly shoals of the Gulf of Maine, such as Brown's or Sables' (often sought when the George's proved not full with fish).

Described on its eastern side, where the winter cod worked, as a "lee shore of breaking seas and shoals," sailing on the Georges never ceased to be very dangerous. The nearer Western Banks of the Georges might have been attempted in October. February was the best month all in all on the George's to handline for cod. But January to February, March to April were good times there as well, with fishing vessels to local Cape banks in fall, and Nantucket shoals in winter.

In winter in the past, bigger handlining heeltapper bankers had chased cod well offshore to the eastern George's, north to the Gulf of Maine, up to Labrador, as politics allowed, beyond the three-mile limits Canada had intermittently set, using areas other than the Grand Banks.

In September of 1853, newspapers reported many north Cape towns sailing again to the Grand Banks for fish. A few months before, in April, they had remarked that local harbors were becoming shallower. October of 1853, Newfoundland and Labrador were reported by the Yarmouth Register as an area our "mackerel fishers do not go," apparently still because of the inshore restrictions by Canadians.

But by 1854 the Grand Banks of Canada were officially reopened to us by the "Reciprocity Treaty." The offshore area around Labrador, Newfoundland, the Grand Banks had always been cod turf. By 1854 the northern seas could be fished again for both brands from April to July, July to September. Just in time: local schools of mackerel and cod had temporarily decreased. The lists of catches for the Chatham area has cod well in the lead, even through the "Chatham Years," until about 1854 when mackerel catches zoomed to about

3,000 barrels. The increase in the catch was due to the increased use of the gill net and was protested. People feared the "extermination" of various fishes by too much dory trawling as well, even as they would, later in the 1800s, protest the use of mackerel purse seines.

After the Grand Banks reopened, if local spots failed, Monomoy may well have fished the Gulf of Maine for cod from June-July to September-November. Fishing the farthest Grand Banks out of Harwich and Yarmouth, Wellfleet, and Provincetown all summer long (April to September) continued until well after the Civil War.

Men could handline off the mother ship on the dangerous Grand and George's in winter. Letting down the cub craft in better weather, two men could handline for cod or for the still popular mackerel, even as they lay, waited for, and then picked up the multi-hooked lines. Other sources say that dory longline fishing and whaleboat seining both ceased altogether on the George's after the 1860s because it was too dangerous; that handlining resumed off the big vessel, with dory lining and long boat seining reserved for the other banks.

Deyo writes that the mackerel men of Harwich, Chatham, Wellfleet, and Dennis went "south to the great schools of this erratic fish at Chesapeake Bay in March or April and followed them in their season's course as they skirted their feeding grounds along the Atlantic coast as far northeast as the Bay of Fundy, and as late as September." Then the fish began to return and were followed by the fleet, until, off Block Island in November, the men usually began their own "homeward journey."

Smaller pinkies and dories may have lined in fall for hake and pollock moving past the Moy's east coast. When they migrated off into the deeper waters of the continental shelf, the bigger boats could take them in winter.

Big and small could have gone for offshore bottom dwelling halibut. And the littler boats might have netted herring inshore, while the bigger ones could take them offshore. When the menhaden and shad collected offshore in spring after spawning, or schooled in juvenile groups in fall, not only weirs could be set but dragnets could be cast out for them from dory boats. The purse seines could be set too, to catch the small fishes.

Bigger offshore boats also began to find deep water haddock at the George's as Whitewash Village closed. Inshore dory men would find tomcod and certain flounders near the Moy in winter.

Vessels with enough room for equipment, for fish, for bunks, took crews who could divide tasks: men who split, gutted, cleaned, cooked mess, hauled nets, set lines; some green, some already "highliners," families, fathers, sons. Out for a day, a week, many weeks. (Depending on whether you were a deep-sea fisherman, an offshore man, a banksman with a

heeltapper, sharpie or pinky; depending on whether you were a nearshore or inshore man, with a pinky, Chebacco, dory or catboat; depending on whether you were a jigger, a seiner or longliner; looking for cod, mackerel, halibut, bass, depending on the season.

From February to November, if a man fished for four months, the government would give him extra pay. There was also a ceiling placed on market prices for fish. By the height of the Village in the 1850s, on the last day of December, 30 ton and above vessels would be paid $4 per ton of fish, a bit less if they were of smaller tonnage. The practice had been going on since 1813; the listing of bounties was placed in Blunts' manual for mariners. (Bounties continued until 1866.)

Daytrips might last a few days. Grand Banks voyages could last about three months in the warmer weather. Other banking might take a week. Taking a half day's sail to get there, working 20 hours a day for a week at a time sometimes; relying now on iced bait which lasted no more than 20 days, berthing on the George's was usually in repeated journeys, briefer than a week.

The scent of the land was good; the corn was planted ashore. On the land of the old salt pasture men heard the leaf like swishing of fast waters, dipped their boats into them, stowed their nets and gear and were able to leave the confines of the turf for the fast adventure of the salt.

I stand at the marina where I was working. I look out to the new boats in the small harbor with its tidal shifts to heights of two men. I replace these with the past. The clear face of a pink cheeked, chiseled, broad-backed sailor is near me, light with the past, attracting me to his history.

Like the rain in a wet spring day, the small fish stippled the waters and the nets rushed out like winds aligning the rain, catching it. Home to a candle and brown bread on a raw, stormy day; smoking some of the catch for yourself perhaps, setting some in the garden such as it was, sending the rest to market.

I was just lucky enough to see one of the dory fishing boats not much larger than a bathtub with rowing or sail capacity available to it; its mast struck for now, clinker-built, wooden. I want to be able to see so clearly the artifacts of his labors, how each vessel was adapted by fish, fishermen, waters, dangers to its shape, like a natural thing. I want to hear their rigging ringing at anchor in the past as if it lived now. Truth is, only the smell of the sea may be the same. But is it? Does the near harbor carry scent the way it did before motors?

19

Powder Hole

During its heyday, the Powder Hole could look like the oft-used 19th century cliche of a "forest of masts." At the height of Whitewash Village, 50-to-80-foot cargo-carrying coastal packets might join the array of fishing boats anchored there. Some vessels traded half a year, fished the other: from April to fall fishing, coasting in winter. In 1862, historian Frederick Freeman commented that during the times when vessels ceased to be remunerative due to lack of fish or limitations of politics, Chatham freighted with converted fishing vessels between Boston, New York, Charlestown, Baltimore; and overseas voyages increased. Monomoy fleet owner Captain Reed commented that sailing vessels freighting goods were by Chatham "supplied with a large quota of Masters and Officers." Those packets carrying cargos of salt and other goods which were made from converted fishing schooners, were usually weightier than their sister fishing ships had been. Sometimes package vessels (packets) were built smaller and lighter for speed: under 50 feet and 40 tons. Many of the freighter/coasters were well above 70 feet and 100 tons. They and the square-rigged clippers, barks, and other ocean crossing vessels which were larger, up to 140 feet and well beyond, could not harbor in the Hole. Giddings Ballou was unceremoniously delivered to his new school post, baggage and all, by a Captain's grace, to slush in at low tide from a big packet bound out of Boston to a destination farther south, because it was too large to ride in to the Hole.

To me, there is nothing so romantic as the glamor of modest sail, unless it be the freedom of a tribal life swathed in the mysteries of the natural world. Refrain:

The tribesman may well have looked at the fisherman with wonder; why depend on this one mode for your existence? Why not add it to many. How odd, the ancients may well have thought, that a man makes a living on a fish boat, sailing of wood, an absolute victim of the dissolution of wind and sea, when he could move about as he needs on land and offshore for his wants.

Yet both modes of life could set the scene for decency, an honor now lost to the world, a brotherhood.

Looking out from the village, the sea was an important character in the concerns of life: it could be friend or foe. If it were soft, wives could relax. If it were annoyed and tense, the hand-crafted boats and the courageous husbands might be lost. In spite of this, nothing could be as peaceful as a fisherman's life. Or tranquil might be the word, tranquil in spite of the sea which could smash you even as the fish elude you. Tranquil because of the release. Released from land, the gulls follow your wake, their plump white and grey, white and black backed bodies, their dipping, askew wings, yield to exotic birds seldom seen on land, except when storm pushes them in, for way out on frosted waters, stiff winged, tobacco-colored shearwaters are gliders over your chummed domain. Minus any fuzz of land fur in the distance, the petrels come out of nowhere, like frogs, dipping and walking on water, pert with white rumps, murky, mossy black fanned wings far away from where they nest in burrows in Antarctica. "The most abundant bird in the world." No land person would know that. You might, if you were lucky, excite to see a tinier, rarer Leach's storm petrel leaving mysteriously perhaps to fly thousands of miles at a hop, living on open seas in winter, a bird halfway between a universe's planet and a spirit. Maybe a blue shark, like the exquisiteness of pure rage itself, cold as a foot turning blue, a missile, emerges from water like a nuke. Finback whales travel like speedy subs, exhaling their high geysers. Humpbacks roll, flap and play, shoot off their spouts like huge "raspberries" of children.

Freedom of fishermen, in their snug houses, their lines set out for repair, coiling rope into their fix boxes, they could be as sociable or aloof as the mood hit. They didn't have to have the multiple dry concerns of the businessman, nor the farmer's constant work, nor the material interests of a world trader, nor the responsibilities of a captain, nor the strict "puppetted" existence of the mariner. As Phil Schwind says in *Cape Cod Fisherman* about one man he knew, "He was gentle and patient...He was stubborn and opinionated." (Touchingly to the point.) He speaks of how generous fishermen can be to greenhorns, telling them what kinds of lines, bait, hooks, nets to use on what fish; how to set their hooks, everything but where to fish (that was, and is – even with all the Lorans – each man's secret).

Think like a farmer, step down into the double house, half-stable, half shelter; lantern in hand.

With its half cellar storage, its sheds with barrels for dried onions and potatoes, consider the season for seed and for reaping.

Think like a fisherman.

Where the land was finite, the sea seemed to be infinite. Where the denuded land was confining the sea might seem intimate, or claustrophobic, depending...

Yet as Captain John Smith wrote, according to Alice Earle, "What pleasure can be more than to recreate themselves before their own doores in their own boates, upon the Sea, where man, woman, and child, with a small hooke and line by angling, may take diverse sorts of excellent fish at their pleasure? And it is not pretty sport to pull up twopence, sixpence, or twelvepence, as fast as you can hale and veare a line?"

Fishermen who fish full time, like men who traded or whaled for years at a time, could not be generalists. Someone else had to provide the food for the table, build the house, in exchange for payment. It would be interesting to know what change fishing made in family life; if families were larger, smaller than farmers had had; if conflict occurred amongst the members of families whose father was away for long periods of time; or if, as certain Victorian novels suggest, the family was knit into cooperation by adversity ashore even as it was when fathers, sons and brothers were at sea together. Did the absences in reality cause infidelities and divorces or at least estranged marriages; did the moral code fence in spouses and fence out potential divorce? Or did the absences perchance make the hearts grow in fondness?

20

During the Village

Navigation Difficult

Certain constants surrounded Monomoy: Dim under the calm illusion of the sea's jeweled nets of currents and rips, the seductive perfect liquefaction of a golden Monomoy sun dashed on dimpled, above-the-water dunes, continued to lie in wait, hidden teeth ready to chomp down on boats. There were still underwater hillocks such as Stone Horse, named for the eerie dark bluish color of its sand containing the bones of horses which had somehow died there. Handkerchief Shoal purportedly loomed up like a cliff, sometimes even above the water itself, in the 19th as it had in the 18th and would in the mid-20th century. Confusing in the best of climate conditions, at times Bearse's and Pollocks' were entirely dry. Running the waters in 1827 you would "Bring Chatham lights to bear N.N.W. then by steering S.S.E. 3 1/2 leagues, you will pass the Pollock Rip, in 3 or 4 fathoms of water." Combining potential lousy weather with horrific navigational problems, the advice in Blunts' of 1827 was, "While passing Chatham in thick weather, approach no nearer than five fathoms to cross the Pollock Rip; edge off and on from five to seven fathoms which will carry you over the P.R. in three fathoms."

Lightships

To aid in navigating the area, there were not only detailed coastal pilots with instructions and charts. Various lightships and buoys would be added to the triangulations of lighthouse lights. Monomoy boasted the "thickest concentration" of light ships anywhere in the world. The first one to be set off the Cape, and one of the earliest in the nation, was anchored near Cross Rip as early as 1828: " 76 feet long with a double mast supporting a 2-foot-long glass and copper lantern." In those days she sat about equidistant from Monomoy, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard.

Soon after, a ship was put in at Pollock Rip. As Whitewash Village grew, by 1849 (the year the whole of Monomoy Beach was valued at $600 and the year the new lighthouse was completed) a new ship went in at Pollock

Rip east of Monomoy where the coastal plains make a 20 foot drop off at the continental slope. Though put into motion by sail, she sat sailless and anchored firm once placed at her station. A photo of her makes her seem like a plain, unlettered wooden tub with two Erector set towers. The light from the new ship was described as "miserable," although she was now a crucial navigation guide.

Ships constructed of white oak were soon added to other difficult rips: the "Stonehorse" in 1852 at Shovelful, and the "Handkerchief" in 1858 at that slue. The Shovelful ship was described as a green vessel with bell, horn, and gun, reflector light, red hoop slung from the mast as a "daymark." She was placed west of Pollock near a black buoy. (Her light was fixed and white until 1885 when it was changed to red.)

At the Village's height in 1857, Blunts' American Coastal Pilot stated "Pollock Rip Lightship, which is painted red, bears S.E. by E. 3/4 E., distant 3 1/4 miles from Monomoy Point light. The light is 45 feet above the sea.

This Rip, on which there are but 5 feet of water, extends 4 miles and in an E. & S. direction from Monomoy Point light. There are two channels across it, the outer one of 13 feet, which has the lightship, and menhaden which bears S.2 degrees W. from Chatham light, distant 8 miles.

To cross the Rip by the outer channel, bring Chatham lights to bear N. 2 degrees E., and steer South until you make a black buoy which bears from the light-ship N. 2 degrees E., half a mile distant and is in 3 fathoms of water, which you leave on the starboard hand, when up with this light-ship, which you can pass on either side: steer W 2/4 S..., 3 miles on this course; you will pass a red buoy on the port hand on the Northern end of the Stone Horse, which bears from the light-ship W. 3/4 S., distant 3 miles. You continue this course to the black buoy, No. 7, on the S.W. part of the Handkerchief, which bears from Nantucket (Sandy Point) light N. 1/2 E., distant 6 1/2 miles.

To cross the Rip through the inner channel, through which you can carry 10 feet, bring Monomoy Point light to bear S.W. 1/2 W. and run on that course till you judge yourself 2 short miles from the light, or see a black buoy S. by E. of you, which you steer for, leaving it on the starboard hand (this buoy is in 13 feet of water;) keep on this S. by E. course one mile, or until you get into 5 fathoms, when you shape your course S.W. by W. 3/4 W., 6 1/2 miles, for the black buoy on the Handkerchief.

This channel will only do in the day time."

(Yikes!)

An example of the continuing complexity is as follows:

Eldridges Pilot:1863 (For Monomoy Shoals)

Bearings and Distances from the Buoy on Pollock Rip: Distance/Miles

The Monomoy Lighthouse, W by N 1-2 N 3 1-10
Chatham Lighthouse, N 7 8-10
Least depth of water on the above Rip, Nov. 1853, six feet.
Buoy on Great Round Shoal S 1-4W 4 9-10
Buoy on Little Round Shoal S by W 1-2W 2 8-10
Sankaty Head Lighthouse S by W 1-4W 15 7-10
Nantucket Lighthouse SW 1-2 S 10 7-10
Buoy on SW part of Handkerchief Shoal W by 5 1-4S 6 6-10
Shovelfull Lightship W 1-2N 4 2-10
Lightship off Cross Rip W 3-4S 17 3-10
Buoy on N part of Stonehorse W 3-4 N 2-3

(There is a note about the "broken part of Pollock Rip" that it is shallow, 9", to be avoided.)

And that was for a clear day.

As *The Blue Water Men* comments about the area of Chatham: although the soil on land was sweeter than elsewhere on the Cape, producing better vegetables, richer roses, the seas were so fickle that "charts are good only until the next storm."

The Lighthouse

As the village grew, with more need than ever for a lighthouse used by homing fishing boats as well as by global sail traffic, the land around it eroded rapidly. Sandy Point, then the terminus of Monomoy, virtually disappeared by as early as 1830. Overseers declared the tower and keeper's cottage almost in ruins by 1838, and the light itself to be in poor working order. Truly in ruins by 1842, it caused something of a political outrage. A Cape Cod man held a unique franchise which accrued to him tremendous rewards even as the lights faded: A Mr. Lewis of Wellfleet had patented his reflector; he had dominated the purchases and suggested construction methods of lighthouses through his friend Pleasanton, Fifth Auditor of the U.S. Treasury, which then ran the lights. Joseph Kennedy Sr. was Chairman of the Committee on Commerce, approving funds for Pleasanton on behalf of Lewis's light in 1841. (Ironic, because Senator Ted Kennedy's office and the Commission for the Preservation of Lighthouses office, along with a Grant in Aid from the Department of the Interior through the Mass. Historical Commission, were directly responsible for helping to refurbish the lighthouse, both cottage and tower, in 1988.) Lewis was paid $60,000 for his reflector-lamps, while the Fresnel lamp, a better invention which could magnify a small amount of light into a great ray through a system of mirrors and lenses, was excluded. (Sixty grand was a hefty sum of money in those days, enough to kick back to insure further purchase of your or

your friend's goods.) A U.S. Lighthouse report of May 1842 prints letters of Mr. Lewis's in his self-defense. Regarding complaints about the lack of size of illuminating reflectors at Monomoy, he says that "Monamoy is a small lighthouse to guide people through Butler's Hole (the southeast area of the place's shoals). 8 lamps with 14-inch reflectors illuminate 24 points of the compass and are all that is needed."

In contrast with Lewis's fees is the amount which the men who did the work of the light were then paid. In 1841, typical for these 19th century years, the payment for these tasks to the Monomoy keeper was stated on his government contract: "Given to Asa Nye as Light House Keeper by the United States through Joseph Pease Esq. Superintendent of the Light Houses in the State of Massachusetts one hundred dollars as a full quarter's salary." (Wow!)

This had not been an era to be beaconless for a few years. Not only were the Monomoy fleets increasing, but, as we have mentioned, ships of all kinds had proliferated since the early Federalist years, on steadily through the 1830s and 40s, as East Coast trade throughout the world as well as to America's west coast expanded. In 1849, as the clipper ships multiplied, a lighthouse tower, 40 feet tall, was built of sheet iron near Powder Hole with an adjacent keeper's house built of wood in the "Cape Cod style," by Pelham Bonney. (The Cape Cod style meant like a Cape Cod cottage with its center chimney and symmetrical bays. Some keepers' houses, like that at Chatham in 1808, were saltboxes. Usually of wood, not always: both the tower and keeper's cottage at Highland by 1857 were of white brick.)

1853 found the lighthouse a mile from Powder Hole, very close to the eastern shore, with 3 cottages around it. In 1855 the tower was remodeled, refitted in cast iron sheets over brick, red with a black lantern; finally given an "inferior" Fresnel lens that is only a "fourth order" light of fixed white. In 1860 the lantern was described as white with a black dome.

Now better equipped, lightkeepers are mentioned as not only sighting and signaling, but participating in saving wrecks. The Highland light's keeper for example, in 1852 saw a ship founder as he was lighting his lamps, only to come down to the Humane boat house to find a "concourse" of locals already waiting to help. Giving them permission to take the boat and light the flares, he helped start the beacon fire. Returning to his lamp lighting duties, he descended the turret to find a rescued man restoring himself by the fire. The keeper continued to help with the recovery of men and the retrieval of goods floating to shore. If not actively engaged in helping, in the mid to late 19th century, lightkeepers were recorded many times at Monomoy as the first to see wrecks and to transmit the information. Light station keepers' station logs often say, "The lightkeeper

informed me," or later in the era, "The lightkeeper phoned the station" (Jan. 31, 1899).

Lifesaving Haphazard
Who Ran the Lifeservices? A Tucker's Terror of Bureaucracy

To navigate here was a mariner's nightmare requiring luck, experience and the mind of an MIT graduate. It was inevitable that wrecks would continue to occur in spite of beacons, lightships, lighthouses, coastal charts. The world was dominated by sail, so the need to protect the lives and property of vessels continued to be of prime importance, but often lives were up for grabs, and property was left to be saved in placed like Monomoy by battling wreckers who often doubled in duty as volunteer lifesavers, in order to have first dibs at the payments to be made for salvaging cargo and wrecks. Since the 1700s in England with Lloyds of London, since the early 1800s in New England with various independent local firms from Plymouth to Boston to the Cape, marine insurance reimbursed owners for lost cargo; while for lost mariners, only the communities themselves would help out the widows and families.

The Massachusetts Humane Society was as involved with lifesaving as the federal government from the time it was organized in 1786. In 1802 it started erecting huts. In 1807 it began to add lifeboat houses to the south shore.

In 1789 a federal Lighthouse Act had put funding for towers on a national basis under Alexander Hamilton as Secretary of the Treasury. In about 1790 he placed the Treasury's Commissioner of the Revenue in direct responsibility over the Lighthouse Service while the Secretary of the Treasury would remain the overseer for this loose confederacy of the Lighthouse Service and the Life Saving Service, with particular jurisdiction over the latter, as well as over the Revenue Service with its sleek cutters created to counteract privateering, slaving, and to check out the papers and the freight of coasters. There were coalitions: Blunts' Coastal Pilot from the 1820s on, mentions Revenue cutters helping the Humane Society in their tasks. Winter cruising of the Revenue ships became permanent by Congressional law in 1837, adding to their ability to help out lighthouses, humane societies and life savers in the most dangerous season. The Blunt brothers mention the lightships of the 1800s as a part of the national Revenue Cutter service, employed for use by the Mass. Humane Society at least to the mid-1800s. The Humane Society itself was closely allied with the Life Saving Service.

By 1840, $3,000 funded lifeboats along the east coast from Long Island to the south shore. In the 1840s more formal attempts at lifesaving began, at first by providing new equipment. An Act of March 17, 1841,

offered $1,750 to provide a lifeboat each to Nantucket, Provincetown, and Chatham, according to the aforementioned "Autobiography of Captain Zachery Lawson." This extended a government mandate to put lifeboats into boathouses added to the Massachusetts Humane Society refuge huts, in locales where they could be most useful. Suitable crews were appointed by the local selectmen to manage them. Boats were provided with oars, buckets and ballast. This was a distinct advantage over the equipment at the old huts so long in use. Isaiah Harding was Captain of the Chatham lifeboat in 1843, which may well have been on Monomoy. He received with his crew $6 each for rescuing the crew of the brig President. (Rewards or prize money for saving started at about 48 shillings.)

In 1845 the Society had about 18 life stations equipped with line throwing mortars and boats. More lifeboats, boat houses, and equipment were funded. Refuge huts still provided shelter. Although in the 1840s the U.S. Treasury department enlarged its extant federal domain over lifesaving stations and lighthouse services, in Massachusetts, the state Humane Society had raised most of the funds with a burst of federal leadership which in turn had helped to back the Humane Society. (There were humane societies in Long Island and elsewhere. They too, would work with federal agencies under whose jurisdiction they were loosely set.)

Commandant of the Treasury's Revenue Marine Bureau, Alexander Fraser, suggested that the Lighthouse Service be restructured as Lighthouse and Lifesaving Service and merged with the Revenue service. (That did not become official until, according to the later formed United Stages Coast Guard reports, "Sumner Increase Kimball, a young lawyer from Maine, was appointed, in 1871, the chief of the Treasury Department's Revenue Marine Division. Kimball agreed that a merger of the U.S. Revenue Cutter System and the U.S. Life-Saving Service would be best for both services and the country." The law which created the U.S. Coast Guard, on 28 January 1915, at last officially combined the two services. See chapter 30 below.) However, in 1848-9, Congress appropriated funds to enlarge the Humane Societies, to put them on a federal footing within the Lighthouse and Lifesaving Service, to man stations and to buy more boats. In 1849, the Massachusetts Humane Society "was supplied with more funds and built 27 more lifeboats, of which at least one was stationed at Chatham," probably on most dangerous Moy near the old Humane hut at its northwest side.

Boats and equipment

Most early surfboats were designed by William Woodhave, modelled after English lifeboats – long-oared wooden boats, big enough to carry 20 people to be rowed by 10 men. They were floated by cork bottoms.

(Surfboats are for rescues from shore, while lifeboats are for rescue from vessels.) In 1807, Henry Raymond designed a newer 30 foot by 10-foot boat with 10 oars and a steering pole. In the 1840s, during the first freshet of a reinvigorated life service, lifeboats were made smaller, to about 20 feet. Dories, both wide and deep, used to transport goods to and from town were added to some life huts. There were "5 life dresses," one boat and several rockets near the Chatham lights in 1854. In 1855, two new lifeboats were given to Chatham, one deployed at Monomoy: "In 1855 large metallic boats from the U.S. Treasury Department at Washington were supplied, one located at Chatham at Monomoy Point with Josiah Hardy, Jr. in charge. (Later keeper of the Chatham Light)." (Chatham Historical Society Note (CHSN). Their parentheses.) The "metallic boats" had been designed by Joseph Francis in 1847 for rescues from the new steamships. They were described as good models, but "rather heavy." Around Chatham, they served for any wreck. This same J. Francis also invented the metal life cars used at the time: a metal lozenge which sealed you in a temporary coffin to be conveyed by rope and pulley to shore. Lyle-guns, a kind of canon which shot out grappling hooks with lifelines by rocket to places where surfboats could not venture, were also standard equipment. Trusses might support the lines shot out to wrecks. "Life dresses" were not life preservers, but Breeches buoys – which was just that, a set of britches on a round hoop attached to a line into which the wrecked would climb to be towed by the seat of their new pants, to shore.

In 1859, the Society built "a number of modern surfboats. One of these was stationed at Chatham Harbor." (CHSN) These new boats held life preservers for the crew and were made extra buoyant by extra floats attached to them. The "Monomoy Boat" was a tubby, sturdy surfboat. According to a pamphlet by the Marine Society of the city of New York, "The Monomoy boat's roots date back to the whaling boats used in the whaling industry and the surfboats used by the U.S. Lifesaving Service (USLSS). The first 'standard' version pulling surfboat was adopted by the USLSS in the early 1870s. It was 25 feet to 27 feet in overall length, had a 6.5 to 7-foot maximum beam, 2 to 2.5 feet depth amidships; and 6 thwarts for a total of 10 oars rowed in double-blanked configuration… There were four basic boat designs used by the USLSS: the Race Point boat, Beebe boat, Beebe-McLellen boat and the Monomoy." Each had special adaptations created for their particular waters (and their lifesaving men). The Monomoy was neither self-bailing nor self-righting.

Lighthouse Problems Go National

Shortly after the 1840s burst of funding, Fraser was transferred, and the united federal services suffered a decline in quality and organization. In

the late 1840s, $5,000 had been allocated to lighthouses too, for lifesaving and equipment which would be given to them by the Revenue Marine's Cutter Service. Since at least 1843 it had been said that lighthouse hirings and firings throughout the service were made according to "political faith or heresy." After the construction and reflector inadequacies of other lights than Monomoy were uncovered, in 1852 a Lighthouse Board took authority from the Commissioner of the Revenue and the Fifth Auditor of the Treasury Department, to oversee the Lighthouse Service adjunct of the Lighthouse and Lifesaving Services, including its lightships. The new board was nominally under the Treasury. (One authority, Weiss, says Fifth Auditor of the Treasury ran the lighthouses from 1820 until 1852, while Witney, another lighthouse buff, says it continued to be the Commissioner of the Revenue until the change to the Auditor. Reports to the lighthouse board which I have read seem to draft items to both the Fifth Auditor and the Commissioner in tandem throughout the 1840s.)

The new Lighthouse Board (consisting of Navy, and Army Corps of Engineer's personnel) also used 28 steamers and two schooners throughout the U.S.'s waters, to tender supplies to lighthouses and lightships and to help in construction. The Revenue cutters were used for these tasks as well. The Revenue Service (whatever its names) still trained men of the Lifesaving and Lighthouse Service (which still had jurisdiction over Humane Society equipment) in lifesaving techniques, assisted in saving as they could, even assigned men to lifesaving duty. But here, too, there were shortcomings, nepotism, and carelessness. Some loss of life which should not have occurred prompted changes.

Neither totally under the state or the federal government, there was bureaucratic confusion for all the services. Funds were in short supply. On and off through the 1840s and 50s, there had been some organization of political appointees who could build lifeboat houses. In 1854, lifesaving was encouraged by the federal government under a new initiative, with plans to fund and build more stations. By 1854 some life station keepers were even paid. Occasionally, paid volunteers (also political appointees in many cases) manned crews. (For Monomoy, the life station keeper was paid, while crews were volunteers.) A note in Blunts mentions new equipment added by the Humane Society in that year; more specifically, the Secretary of the Treasury had ordered Revenue cutters of the Revenue Marine Service to protect Massachusetts Humane Society's lifeboats and rockets.

Good intentions aside, in the 1850s, a time of political anarchy at the federal level coupled with local neglect and nepotism would mar the efforts. The late 1840s to the Civil War was in many ways anarchic. Political conflicts within government, then, as now, affected the administrative

bureaucracies. Lifesaving and Lighthouse Services disintegrated along with other Federal bureaucracies. Even the stalwart, though many-named, Revenue Service suffered. On the south shore of Massachusetts, the Humane Society could try to do what it could.

Humane Society Boat Houses and Charity Huts

Henry Beston says in *The Outermost House* that in 1856 the Humane Society only had about six lifeboats and two rockets for all its nine to twelve lifesaving buildings.

By 1857, as Thoreau describes it, the state of the Charity huts – those refuges without a lifesaving facility attached – across the Cape was deplorable. As barren and desolate as the whole peninsula itself can occasionally appear, so were the wind-shriven, hole-filled, depleted closets of despair. With his characteristically wry sarcasm (he is always taken so seriously, so biblically, people forget his humor), Thoreau sums up the cold, locked house, with its wood pile on the floor but little else, as a death box. "How inhumane humanity. How cold charity." The detailed instruction which pamphlets and pilots gave for coming ashore to these refuges seem a sorry mockery in the face of the reality of blinding blizzards and woeful seas.

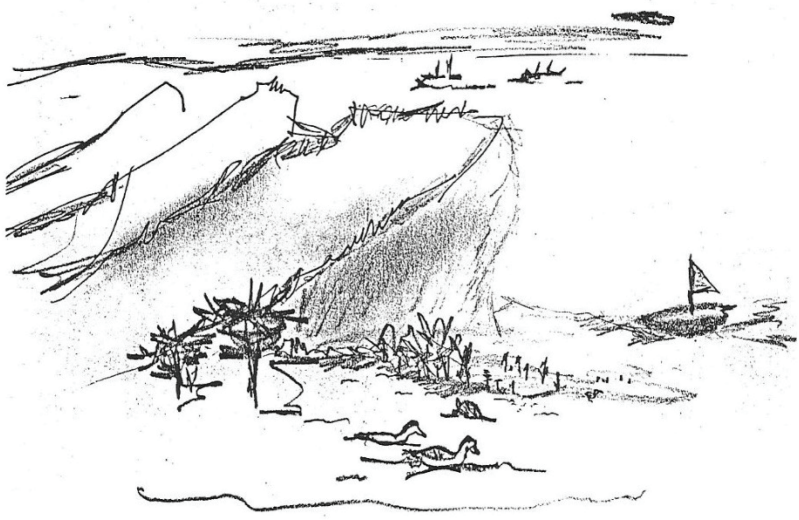
Monomoy Wreck Reports described ships as "pounded" or "anchor-dragged," or as "striking something; having mistook a landmark," those ships which fell apart in the waters. Leaving a sailor wading to the mirage of the shore wet and numbed only to have that sudden hope raised when he sees a hut suddenly denied by a lack of kindling wood and dry clothes with which to save himself, how much greater must be "the bitterness of his despair" when he finds "the cheap, but to him, invaluable materials, basely pilfered...With all hopes blasted how much better to have...much fatigued, and overcome by excessive cold, been committed to the mercy of the deep." In such words even the Humane Society itself bemoaned pilfering.

When Whitewash Village was full, dilapidated Charity huts would not be a problem on Monomoy. When it was empty, it was another matter.

The Monomoy rescue station, that is, boat house and hut, was moved south in 1862, during the Civil War. probably because the emptying village could not be relied upon to save men. This refurbished Humane hut may have replaced the old wigwam.

In 1862 Monomoy was described as so: "The beach, the extremity of which is Sandy point has on the E. side, a curve called Stewart's bend, north of the bend are bars and shoals, and a little below the beach on the West side is Wreck Cove...On the western side of the beach are salt-marshes; but these have been greatly diminished by the driving of the sand." Unfortunately, no description of the hut is writ.

As the Village grows, it looks over a host of vessels and men who can help to save the wrecked. Salvagers patrol daily, nightly, to look for wrecks as they have since wrecks began here. Others patrol sporadically on a volunteer basis. When storm arose, and rains came down to displace sands, neither of land nor of sea, this place was a middle being, something of fog and damp. Stacks of driftwood, spars, or cordwood were set in a teepee shape near the keeper's cottage. Lit to cheer and guide the wrecked, the bonfire will alert the village as well as let the wrecked know they are about to be succored. There is a lifeboat in the dory house up island which I can summon help by gunshots to man. A lightship can better sound off, send flares. Lightships ring their bells, shoot off their whistles over the seas. Before the end of the century buoy bells and fog horns may be added to the quartet. As the village empties at the commencement of a civil war, men once more are at the mercy of the occasional life man on the Point.



21

During and After the Village
Scarcity: Denuded, Eroded, Less Lumber, Less Food

By the 1840s, independent Federalist era entrepreneur-captains and mariners were now more often in the employ of Boston, but still the Cape boasted still more sea captains than virtually any other local area. Now new professionals and specialists in burgeoning businesses, smiths, wheelmakers, teachers proliferated. These new professionals had increased material wants. Industrialization, the age of the machine, the steam engine, the mill town, the factory, the city was ushered in by the 1820s. It had set its roots in the south shore near Plymouth and Taunton as early as the beginning of the 1800s.

On the Cape while ship building increased, manufacture continued; enabled by the Cape Cod railroad's entry in 1848, Sandwich Glass Works increased its output. From the late 1840s on, "cradles" for panning gold, made for the diggers from California to Colorado, were built of Cape wood out of Bourne. As emigrants journeyed west, not by ship but by wagon, Cape Cod built Conestogas, and would build railroad cars. In the late1840s Chatham had a sheet iron factory. She had three or four general stores for fish and goods. She built "blocks" which may have supported some Monomoy houses or may have been the blocks in "block and tackle." She had a shoe factory in the 1850s using some Sandwich cattle hides, some imported hides. She had flour and grain mills, wharfs and marine rails. (Some of Chatham's manufactories would be with her through the 1890s.) A few tanneries, mills, windmills and salters were left on the Cape, but wool and fulling mills increased on sites where grist and sawmills had been. Chatham and other Cape towns from Harwich to Wellfleet could in the 19th century clothe themselves by buying Cape Cod fabrics, locally milled wool, and cotton.

While 18th century spermaceti lit the towns, dark woods had been increasingly felled to fuel the salt vats, as they had been felled in the past to supply wood for trying whales, for building and for hearth fires, for trade

in clapboard and ships' parts. Provincetown had suffered dire erosion by the Revolution. Barnstable too, was fearful of quite literally losing ground, especially on Sandy Neck, by the same time. Chatham was short of fuel and lumber as early as the beginning of the 1800s. (See Chapter 13.) Much of the mid Cape was denuded by the early 1800s; Yarmouth to Brewster saving a rim of scruffy forest on the hills. The south Cape to Falmouth was being deforested for and eroded by sheep. It turned to whaling and south coast lumbering as a means of economic welfare. By the 1820s pockets of forbidding forests were left on the outer Cape: patches of ominous woodlands still dimmed the hollows of the outer Cape in Wellfleet and enlivened the hills of the north side at the same time as Chatham and other towns began to replant trees.

Wolves had been extinguished in the 1700s. In the 1800s, their swampy haunts would suffer. White cedar had been cut to make saltpeter during the wars, as well as for its wood for house shingles. By the 1830s it was felled in Chatham to release bog iron from the soil under the big, thousand-year-old trees; to take the peat under the forests, for fuel. In the 1840s, Hitchcock described desert-like conditions in the former "Grainery" of the Cape at Eastham's tablelands as Sandwich and Bourne cut trees for the railroad, for those Conestoga wagons to the west, for fuel to be shipped on packet boats across the bay, for turpentine and pitch, for smelting bog iron and for naval parts. By the 1840s, Chatham, like much of the Cape was furiously replanting pitch pine, adding imported locust trees to set nitrogen in poor soils.

Thoreau in the late 1850s described a whole land now severely eroded by the centuries of wood cutting and farming. Replanting efforts intensified. In 1857, Jan. 17, Thoreau looked through a telescope at Monomoy, saw fishermen's houses, a lighthouse and even a few wooded portions (as we have mentioned), "Like islets in a sea." In Chatham proper the swamps are drained for "cranberry bogs and pasture, as well as for peat fuel. Most of the town's supply of wood comes from abroad, but little woodland remaining in the township. Notwithstanding the discouraging... agricultural prospects, English hay is cut here and corn and rye raised, whilst good gardens on every side." (Rye finally had found some planting success on the Cape.) He says that fish and shellfish are abundant on the coast although wildfowl, "if not so plenteously obtained as formerly, still flourish as sport for marksmen." Cranberrying was an industry which would gain momentum after the Civil War, using white cedar swamp and bog alike. As cedar and bog was all mainland Chatham had left to its woods, save for some replanted pitch pines, that was almost that: With woods cut and fields overused, Chatham would taste even more erosion.

The first forty years of the Republic on Cape Cod had been an age of increasingly global mariners. By the Age of Fishers, the Cape had traded off much of her forest in the acute changeover from forest to farm. She had traded off her topsoil in forest and farm, in part to supply home-fire essentials, or those things so considered in part to supply the goods of trade to these mariners. Not only did this mean less timber, but it meant farm production was curtailed. The primary goods, and the goods metamorphosed through farm animals, decreased even more. Thus, it had been not solely the world politics of the Canton trades, the competitiveness of the other world trades, but the dearth of other local options as farming and trade dwindled which made the Cape once more rely on fish.

In the 1830s Chatham imported lumber for housing from Georgia and Maine, for fuel from the Upper Cape, but she still ate Cape Cod produce. By the 1850s, Chatham imported more, if not most, of her basic needs, as well as whatever luxuries she might afford from other parts of New England and the south. She now likely no longer ate cattle, save rarely when it came in from the south and the near west by ship. (By the 1850s and on it would come into the east by steamer and rail, and then by railroad.)

Thus from 1830 to 1860, as the Cape's necessities grew scarcer and scarcer; when she could she imported or manufactured some needs locally. Scarcity may have impelled the importation or manufacture of goods, essential and non; however fishermen, the predominant population on Monomoy, often did not have the money to buy what they may have needed.

Scavengers and Salvagers, Unsavory Characters

"The objects around us, the make-shifts of fishermen ashore, often made us look down to see if we were standing on terra firma," said Thoreau. The ocean was a big store. As anyone who likes to beachcomb knows, not only shells and pieces of glass and driftwood but varied other surprises can wash up. Thoreau said that Spice Islanders could but shake nutmeg into the sea and it would arrive on far shores, along with seeds of new nurseries of plants, bodies of the dead, and the various coins and cargos of vessels.

During these years when the Cape had little of anything and "barrenness made men to eat their hearts," a good way to find imports which needed no payment was to scavenge the shore. Firewood came by sea. When Monomoy or Chatham and Harwich could not buy, or when needs were not available to buy, she made do, creating them out of materials at hand, often scavenged. Scarcity meant that wreck hulls would provide not only firewood, but free parts to retool whatever was needed. House shingles could be carved from masts; oars used for rails. Tools could be remade.

House shingles could be carved from masts; oars used for rails.

Anchors and chains brought good money, dragged for, retrieved.

The unpublished "blue jacket" manual for wreckers as Asa Lombard said (the original Blue Jacket manual was for the Lifemen) was as follows: For a pirate ship, take the gold and silver. For a merchantman from India or China or Africa, take the cargo if were not salt damaged; for a fishing boat, the nets, sail, and canvas; halyards, cleats, chainplates. In five minutes in the early 1900s, he and a friend lifted "flagpole holder, bow chocks, anchor cleats, four portholes, bronze rudder, propellor, shafts." (Recycling, anyone?)

Wreckers, "like buzzards coldly turning their backs" might a bigger reward reap if the vessel out there foundering were lost and the men upon her dead. The ship would then be ready to collect as loot and as salvage. Scavenging became a form of unlicensed salvaging with men picking over the debris after wrecks, while ostensibly a wrecker was a man who legally salvaged ships and cargos from the sea for a profit. Money was made raising ships for the concerned owners and the insurance companies. Money was also to be made by selling unclaimed parts to those who would buy. Though salvaging per se was respectable, with laws governing the registering of retrieved goods as early as the mid-1700s, some considered it a bit like holding the ships' parts up for ransom to their rightful owners, to resell the parts they already owned to them. Undoubtedly some were sincere in their aid to the wrecked, brave and selfless, scrupulous in their raising of wrecks, their return of goods to rightful owners yet persisted rumors of booty deliberately hidden in the sands to be sold later for higher profits to less than legal buyers.

During the stay of Whitewash Village, at the cry of "Wreck OH!" or "Skewner ashore!" even the school children, one of whom was always dreaming, gazing out the window, would burst out of the Monomoy school to the master's dismay, without even a "B'yr leave." The same calls brought everyone rushing out of the Monomoy church. The preacher merely commented, "Let's all start fair." As Ballou wrote, "And when sounds the cry Wreck Oh, what a scampering there is," as everybody tumbled outside to see what had arrived. Etchings of those awaiting spoils of wreckers, showed men near horse and carts, wheels in muck, barrels nearby. The goods would be carted to railways and sent on to Boston. Wreckers have special boats, beach buggies, special sized modular saws to fit their carts, chisels, axes, knives, and later, bolt and chain cutters.

The men in the Village may have been wrecker/lifeman one month, fishermen the next, coaster mariners next, maybe even green whalers another; yea, mooncussers at worst, scavengers at best, another; the last two occupations could carry on during the Village, after its official

existence, as well. Indeed, that other ghoulish side would not go away: Chatham, even Harwich was not particularly proud of Monomoy's continuing rep as a shelter for men who may have deliberately lured ships to destruction. Envious Orleans may have turned a blind eye because Nausetters were still accused of doing the same thing, mooncussing. And while Barnstable cast slurs, Monomoyers responded that it was "Green grape cankers itchin' the tongues." On the remote part of the island's north, when it was populous, or in its south when it was vacated, wreckers may well have turned a back to mariners' distress signals, so as to let the seas have their way with the wooden holds, sweeping booty ashore. Though writers have sought to puff out the legends, there were many stories. Even Rudyard Kipling tells a tale of a ghost of a mooncussed captain, singing out "Yoho" across Monomoy, when it was in the mood.

"Finders-keepers," as writer Lombard suggests, was a ubiquitous ethic here. Scarcity may well be a motive for larceny. Or perhaps bravery justifies its being allowed certain perks. Anyone who had ridden out the dragons of the St. George's might have felt entitled to spoils, although surely, they would not have wanted to risk unknown or even known lives for them. Monomoy's reputation continued to so terrify sailors, that in an oft told tale it is reported that a wrecked mariner would prefer the open sea aboard a plank to coming ashore here. To paraphrase Corbett and others:

"Even today they tell the joke about the shipwrecked wretch who came ashore on the beach there, clinging weakly to a spar.

'Where am I?' he gasped as a couple of inhabitants came up to him

'Monomoy.'

'Monomoy? My God!' cried the horrified man, and paddled briskly out to sea again."

Captain Lamson the Unfrozen claimed in 1802 the inhabitants stole not one thing of him. One wonders if he would have needed to make that claim had the place's rep been entirely honorable in the first place.

22

No More The Harbor: Village End

The reason for the village had been its anchorage. This good, deep, sheltered harbor had opened up here on the Moy's southwest side at Powder Hole around the end of the 1820s, even as the old colonial harbor farther north at Wreck Cove, which by 1827 was "navigable for boats only," (meaning shallow vessels), had closed up. In 1851/2 after the so-called Yankee Gale which lost hundreds of fishermen in New England seas, Ballou, the Monomoy schoolmaster, said that winter made Nantucket and even Vineyard Sound look like the arctic, filled with wrecks. Nauset beach, he said, had broken and a new harbor was formed. Sand washed down to Monomoy. The work of these gales was followed by others: 1858: "During the gale of Sept.16 the tide overflowed the NW point, washing away every one of the stores of Loveland and Thacher. Their wharf, fish flakes, a lot of fish and loose material about the place swept away." (CHSN) In 1861 the Congregational parsonage burned down, beginning the end of Monomoy's village. In 1862, the schoolhouse was sold. In the 1860s, cargo coasters were destroyed by the Confederate Navy; even Yankee fishing vessels were targets. The very important southern market for salted fish was closed to the Cape. Closing markets, depredation, and the vulnerability of the island contributed to the shutdown of the Monomoy fisheries. So did closing harbors.

By a September hurricane in 1869, Powder Hole kept silting up. In the lower quarter of the southeast side, when the place looked on maps more like a boot, since before the Revolution, through 1807 to at least 1827, there had also been, as we have mentioned, "a curve in the shore, called Stewart's Bend, where vessels may anchor with safety in 3 or 4 fathoms of water when the wind blows from north to S.W." The same actions which opened the Powder Hole had mostly washed out the Bend, although anchorage at it was mentioned as late as 1862 as an offshore port for shallow craft, but not a full harbor. It too, would be completely washed out by the storms of the 1870s. By 1872 only two feet of water remained at Powder Hole. Some of it would be recast into a brackish pond as sands curved round it, choking out the salt, awaiting reopening in the same area but through the newly added

depositions of sand and mud. By the late 1870s and afterwards, it would expand again for small craft, as Inward Point harbor. *The Spartina patens of the marsh is an animal, it moved. I kneel down to stroke it; it grows like a tree, in increasing necklaces. Does it remember the past vessels?* "Everything was at a high-water mark of prosperity when it was noticed with dismay that the effects of the Ocean tides were beginning to tear away the arm of the Beach that embraced the harbor," Captain Joseph Reed stated in an 1891 interview with the Chatham Monitor.

The lack of a deep enough draw in the harbor meant it could not fit both the old vessels and the newer, larger, clipper-schooners. Some were 78 feet and 87 tons with 20-foot dories, some were past 100 feet, starting to be built as the Village was being deserted. The kind of Grand Banker or Gloucester schooners associated with two or more decades of fishing in the latter part of the 19th century, with its removable topmasts taken off for winter fishing, put back on to carry lots of high fresh sail in spring, was, as we have said in a previous chapter, not in the main a Cape Cod vessel. Monomoy and Chatham would watch these vessels pass onto waters formerly in her domain as their new technology outdid itself. Needing too much capital and too many men, they could no longer be a clan affair. The fishermen who in the past scoffed at bigger vessels hierarchies of masters and mariners as "puppets on a string," whether seiner or liner, ultimately must work harder, split more dividends. After the Civil War, Provincetown, Wellfleet, and Harwich could afford the capital and manpower to build and to crew these, and would send them to line for replenishing cod, to seine for mackerel. They could compete with the north shore, because of its nearness to the fishing grounds as well as to the railroads and to Boston, which would take the lead in fishing. Those still near the Chatham island of Monomoy would keep smaller boats available for offshore trips.

Ballou had written, "The little territory dotted by Monomoy village is a battle ground between sand on the one side and wind and water on the other. At tide the sea rushes up in long tortuous creeks, and almost touches the lighthouse fence on the eastern shore, and the dwellers in their cottages might well look to their anchor and tackle, lest they should find themselves adrift in the morning...The sea comes up the front stairs in winter tides and the inhabitants go visiting by boat...But the golden age of Monomoy has passed away. Lighthouses and light-boats, and careful charts, and longshore pilots multiply. And the sand is sweeping about the little harbor and its habitants, ever mindful of the encroaching wave, have begun to forsake the beach for the main, taking with them even rooftree and stone-hearth. And the 'Captain' no more shells the native clam for the big pot on the stove."

23

Interlude: The Village in Seatime

Village Funk: Houses and Fashions and Ships

The houses of the European settlers at first had been wattle and daub, thatched roofed, one room cottages with lofts such as those at Plimoth Patuxet Museums. Oil paper covered the wood shuttered windows. Occasionally in the mid-1600s, when Massachusetts Bay sported new colonists and hostilities threatened, garrison style houses were built such as the Hoxie House at Sandwich. By the 1670s, settlers may have built stockade style houses or post and sill, vertically planked, medieval Tudor "hall and parlors" covered with wooden roofs, warmed by chimneys at the end gables, set with a rare group of leaded, unopenable, casement windows. To the back of high-pitched roofs, ells were added. Pine and cedar shakes concealed the beams of the new "saltboxes." By the late 1600s, substantial two and a half story Cape Cod houses, early Georgians designed in big square dimensions such as the Yarmouth Inn, were built for those gaining the wealth to do so.

By 1752, at least for Captain Atwood of Chatham, gambrel roofed houses were built. These had been around, as had bow roofs, since at least the 1650s and may have been a more popular form than we realize, as well as a predecessor to what, by the 1730s, would be the low ceilinged, ship's carpentered, compact Cape Cod cottage we now associate with colonial Cape Cod. This dwelling may have derived from the Cape Ann cottage, and was probably around, at least on Nantucket, by the late 1600s. This was a house of choice for growers, herders, mariners, captains, fishermen, carpenters who were not involved in the wealthier aspects of entrepreneurialism.

Whatever the style, 17th and 18th century abodes' hand-hewn timbers were supported by large beams, decorated with wide, planked white pine floors, and often had weatherboard or clapboard sheathing. They had in common a feeling more akin to the manor than the modern age, more like the Middle Ages. These dark houses with huge hearths collected up land beneath them throughout wars with the Narragansetts, with Philip, with

Canada's French, Hurons, Ojibway and Cree.

Next to the compact Cape farms, two- and one-half story, Georgian houses, big, squared, sometimes hip-roofed with a huge center chimney, sometimes with a high gabled roof which sported four chimneys between the center and the sides grew larger as wealth was acquired in the mid-18th century to the Revolution.

After the vicissitudes of wars, at the century's turn, through and past the War of 1812, as expectations of a country free from economic enslavement raised hopes for new profits from new markets, the roof quite literally began to be raised again. Notably during the Embargo which led up to the war of 1812 and during that war, Federalist houses became narrower from front to back, not the big square the Georgians and later Federalists would be, due to belt tightening and lack of resources. Federalist houses were often crafted of wood from Maine and Georgia because of local timber dearth.

By 1820, also due to scarce wood, lighter balloon framing had been invented. Houses were covered in thin, new clapboards. The raised ceilings were flattened in flattery of classical styles. From the Renaissance's architect of Italy, Palladio, to the English Inigo Jones, to Christopher Wren to the newly freed colonies' Thomas Jefferson, Bullfinch, and the Adams brothers (not the presidential ones) came our version of classical housing: big squares and rectangles of homes with matched, paired rooms, flat or hipped roofs, ells added on, many chimneys fetched off to the roof sides. Wallpaper and painted paneling replaced the older wide board pine dealwood, while plastered ceilings covered the older Georgian timbers.

Across at Chatham's Great Hill, perhaps visible from the Moy by spyglass, a huge yellow, hip-roofed, Federalist manse with at least four chimneys in pairs tucked in from the gable ends of its rectangular lines, went up off Bridge Street before the Lighthouse did, built by someone in the China trades. The flat-topped manses ashore with their endless ells added in back for servants and horses indicated a Cape squire, perhaps a local entrepreneur or sea captain in the service of a Boston financier.

The sea itself affected the living on land. Mariners as well as captains and farmers often opted for the home crafted by a ship's carpenter who knew both ships and houses; how to make them snug and tight against the gales. Shingle sheathing continued, of pine and white and red cedar shakes.

For the Monomoy farmer/fisher/seaman, the Cape Cod cottage with its quaint story and a half, steep stairway to the second floor nestled near the center chimney, low ceilings, compact rooms, evenly pitched roof, was increasingly popular as housing for the "common man" by the 1800s and described from Timothy Dwight in the early 1800s to Thoreau in the

1850s as much the same in design. Windows flanked the small door; in fact, it was described as having many windows under the roofs, to let light into the "closet." It fit snugly into a hollow to get an ocean view. Often starting with a half house for a newlywed couple, ells were added to the back, later. On the mainland a tiny 15-foot by 15-foot half Cape like the Mayo house, with units of 15-foot by 20-foot ells attached in the back, could well have been on the isle in its early post-war period, eventually to be masked in Greek Revival moldings.

A renewed interest in classicism had begun in the Enlightenment of the late 1700s and sifted through France's Revolution and into American Federalist design. Now, during the late 1820s, it would blossom in early Greek Revival architecture. (The "Free French " stylish version of democracy had become tyrannical by the end of federalism here.) As the Village opened it was Greek Revival houses based on perfect geometric squares and triangles whose symmetrical gable ends faced the streets which were built.

In Chatham and elsewhere many of the onshore abodes would continue to be larger, more formal than those in a fishing village. By the 1830s, what a funky place Whitewash Village would have become with its houses built on sand in that new Cape Cod Greek Revival style, its wide gable end now facing the street. The vernacular mode was not pillared; rather it had moldings on the gable end, depicting a symmetry, but was more like Vermont farmhouse than Greek temple.

The offshore backers of the Monomoy fishing fleet might have lived in their grand four chimneyed Federalist manses, complete with servants quarters, coach and fours, stables, but while the manses held entrepreneurs or captains ashore, on Monomoy the smaller abodes, sometimes twinned, with two colorful doors' entry for two related families, with their steep stairs, their step down into a lantern lit entry near the stair well, housed a community of like-minded men, enjoying a special union.

Gable ends still faced the street, but houses lost some of the squared geometric grace which had helped spawn the Clipper ships in the late 1840s. By the 1850s houses two storied, taller houses, had a high, narrow, gabled roof. And like all small houses of the time from the colonial period on through the 1870s, they were still built ready for the wings of smaller complementary modules – complete with trellises and rambling roses.

Monomoy through the 1840s to the 60s would remain sturdily Cape Cod, a less formalized fishing village mix of the Cape Cod house with Greek Revival cum Victorian. Some houses may have been reminiscent of the village at the tip of Sandy Neck still extant, with its pilings and porches; or at its height, the village may have resembled Provincetown in its close-

fit houses more of the 19th century's "modern style" than of fishermen's huts. Some houses and buildings related to shipping and fishing would most likely be on piles. Where there were ground hugging, low buildings, there were likely cellars of about nine feet by 12 feet. They (like wells operated at first not by hand pumps but by block and tackle) might have been of imported brick from nearby Plymouth or of "block" from Chatham.

Wearing

As spermaceti candles lit interiors through the mid-1700s, costumes changed. When Will Nickerson invaded what would become Chatham, he would have been wearing the heavy homespun woolen trousers with jerkin and boots, dyed in the bright colors of his day; his wife would have a skirt of the same fabrics over a high hip hoop called a farthingale, a bodice or blouse tucked into it. As wealth increased, fabrics became finer; women wore corsets and wider hoops under fine wools, linens and silks, imported by way of England; men wore tight breeches, tights, and waistcoats. Natural hair, tied back under beaver bicorns turned to bewigged or powdered hair under tricorns after the wars with Canada.

On the farms, on the sea, men and women wore plainer homespun; lived near homey pine furniture, not next to Chippendale curlicues of highboys, wing chairs and newly conceived sofas. The Federalist era, from 1780 to the 1820s, coincided with the French Napoleonic empire. Clothing relaxed for both men and women, with the classic look of the ribbon under the bosom, the looser trouser and waistcoat; hair was natural, longish for men, tied back in ringlets for women; while at the same time an open attitude emotionally was encouraged in the light of the ongoing classicism. Men were even encouraged to cry.

Oddly, the empire frocks, sans hoops or very constricting corsets, changed to hoops and tight stays by the 1830s, as a new romantic movement would enter in the 1830s, turning Gothic a decade later. Corsets and bustles would enter in the era after the Civil War, and clothing would not relax for women until the twentieth century, while trousers had been in for men since the mid-1800s at least.

Some Vessels

The ships which plied the seas of the early years of the 1400s through the 1600s from the West Indies to Canada, to England and back, were at first those bulky, square-sterned galley-like, bathtubs of 30- and 40-ton pinnaces, carracks, and galleons with their attendant shallops; these latter square-sail boats occasionally set their single sail to the side. There were versions of these small shallops with one or two sails: the ketches, for local sailing, fishing, and trading, while the bigger ships explored, warred,

and sailed the ocean.

Around the middle of the 17th century, gaff-rigged sloops began to sail the Caribbean waters. By the late 1600s, streamlined Jamaican sloops with one or even two fore-and-aft rigged masts, and new brigands' ships or brigantines, with two masts, one rigged square and one rigged gaff or lateen, designed for their speed in evading pirates in the Caribbean and elsewhere, rapidly became popular for traders, as well as for slavers in the North Atlantic. Taverners such as Thomas Huckins of Barnstable or Stewart of Monomoy (some of the first merchants organized by Plymouth Colony for the trade in corn, furs and clapboard to the motherland), may well have supplied themselves with spirit, powder, shot, with the aid of sloops averaging a mere 40 tons, and with slightly larger square-rigged, two-masted brigs.

In the 1700s, two-masted, square-rigged "snows" and brigs changed their hull shape to rounder, lowered their foredecks, and changed their mainmast heights and rigging. Two-masted topsail schooners, invented in 1713, were abundant by the mid-1700s and were used for such as the coastal trades on the Cape.

Three-masters such as East Indiamen and warship frigates existed in the 18th century but were largely English, sailed by the mother country, not by New Englanders and seldom by Capers. But when the French financed John Paul Jones to build a navy towards the Revolution's end some three-masted warships were added to the American rag tag navy of schooners and two-masted privateers.

After 1790 or so, more American three-masted frigates were created, such as the USS Constitution, "Old Ironsides" (built in 1797) which defeated the British frigate Guerriere and others in the war of 1812. (She was fashioned of such heavy oak that she was named "Ironsides." She served in active duty and other capacities until the late 1870s!)

It was a small brig which had been the first Cape Cod vessel to round the Horn in the 1790s. Then, imitating English frigates and East India men, American vessels evolved their own version of "merchantmen" vessels with heavier tonnage three-masted ships and barques (barks) for the newly emerging world trade, yielding to faster clipper ships. (In their day, ships were often described less by rigging, than by what they did: Coaster, Merchantman, Privateer. According to a list of Merchant vessels of the United States in 1888, just about any vessel could be a merchant ship.)

During the time after the War of 1812 to the Greek Revival, three-masted ships increased in size. The brigs, schooners, frigates, and ships of the Federalist era continued to enlarge their tonnage, sailing over the world from Japan in 1819, to Australia and beyond. Three-masted ships

with square sails; barques with two masts in square sails and a mizzen mast or after mast, fore and aft rigged; barkentines with the foremast square, the other two in schooner rig, fore and aft; brigantines and brigs of two masts too, with their still mixed rigging; topsail (one square sail) schooners, went all over the world engaged in many tasks from whaling to trading. Three hundred-ton ships and barques whaled to far waters of the South Atlantic while whaling brigs might be of a heft of 150 tons and schooners of 100 tons or less whaled closer to home, as they interchanged tasks of coasting, Atlantic trading, cod fishing, fur trading and privateering from the 17th to the 19th centuries.

By the 1840s and 50s, raked-masted, slender-hulled clippers careened swiftly over the seas. (Many Cape men were captains of these ships which could not anchor in their own backyard bays.) The three-masted clipper with its very tall and elegant exaltation of sail, its incredibly skilled shipmasters and builders, had its brief glory, rounding the Horn and rushing to California and involved in the China trade; phased out by the 1870s.

During the Civil War, frigates like the south's Merrimac, which could run on steam and sail, became truly ironclad, armored; not merely reinforced with hard oak and copper as Old Ironsides had been fit with none other than Paul Revere. War mechanisms, once again, often proceeded common mercantile uses.

After the Civil War manufacturing rose, demanding larger vessels. Captains hired on to command private yachts or immigrant packets or big, slow, many-masted, schooner-barges to haul ice and coal and iron. Huge barquentines, barques, and even brigs lingered on with changes in mizzen rigging. In the 19th century, as coal and ice were added to cargos, as national trade goods expanded, barques in particular grew larger, adding four masts and larger schooners of three and four (and even five!) masts rather than two, were designed, while three-masted ships continued to whale around the globe.

The height of sail with its romance and elegance climaxed. Logged by Isaac Small, the Highland observer at Truro and others, was every ship which passed by to report to Boston (just as Woods Hole logs them now, taking up so many boxes there would probably be three miles of paper.) After the Civil War steam driven vessels increased, carrying cargo and immigrants.

By 1885, about 75 percent of vessels on our shores were still pilot boats, schooners, yachts, sloops, fishing sloops, whalers, schooner barges, even some square-riggers, usually smaller brigs, with a few foreign vessels. About twenty-five percent were steamers. (According to the USLSS Annual Report they had a higher casualty rate for wrecks than sail then.)

The steamers had made their first treks up western rivers such as the Missouri, in the 1830s. One of them carried Custer to his last battle in 1876. They had become ferries from the Vineyard and Nantucket in 1854.

Fast-sailing mail packets which also carried cargo and passengers had been replaced by those steam ferries such as the Acorn, which Thoreau took back from Provincetown to Boston. Sail packets were chosen over steam by many a local captain, however, and the last run of them was announced twice: "No Boston Packet This Year" out of Yarmouth in 1871, while Dennis stopped her elaborate balls and flag codes hoisted up on hills like Black Ball to signal departure and arrival times for her packet fleets in 1874. Even as the Boston packets stopped, Chatham's schooner-rigged Emulator travelled, as she had during the Revolution and after, to various ports, concentrating on New Bedford from 1878-1896. Night boats, combining steamboat and rail travel would peak in the 1880s. Rail and steamer were beginning to rule by the time one of the last fully square-rigged ships went around the world in 1893. Yet, in the early 1900s, Palmer's four and five masted schooners were in demand as cargo vessels for coal. (Steam engines powered their sails' hoisting capacity.)

Imagine: just as we know the difference between a Ford and Jaguar, a car, pickup, truck or ten wheeler – from the first pinnaces and carracks bringing colonists to Cape Cod, to the Palmer fleet schooners, in the roads near and far of the salt water seas around Monomoy and the Cape people would have known the type of vessel and its mission, whether fisher, whaler, packet or cargo vessel; sloop, schooner, brig or ship. Imagine the beauty of the age of sail (with an inland free of cars and blacktop) as on the seas you saw the flocking elegance of sails.

Age of the Machine, An Undercurrent

Style reveals us. The change from the outdoors-brought-indoors beams and hearths of the Colonials, to the Chippendale refinement of the Enlightenment, to the chunky curving luxury of Federalist furniture. to the rolled sides of the Recamier couches of the sensual and unabashedly emotional Napoleonic era when men stopped wearing wigs had descended into the strange mongrel thought (and furniture) of declining classicism and a rising romanticism. (This sentence is quite as bulky as the times were.)

At least the colonial era unto the Greek Revival had provided a period of some of the most delightful housing, let alone some of the most interesting, formalized philosophies, the world has seen. But by the Victorian height, the styles of internal mind, external aesthetic had changed from plain to fancy, to downright ornate and rococo. Victoria grew paunchier and more prudish as her consort died and stayed long dead. From the 1830s to 1901,

for some odd reason, much of the western world mirrored the emotional changes of the British queen.

As the era progressed, while the ships were elegant, onshore simplicity yielded to a Victorian mode, a Gothic romanticism which had, in ideas and fashions, reacted against classicism and rationalism even earlier than the changes in architectural style. The fusty stuff of Victoriana, its out of proportion two story houses, off kilter multi stories, allowed to wander because of the new perfected central heating, the ghastly (my personal opinion) Mansard roofs of the Civil War, and the French Second Empire, the post war witch's gables; the curlicued or plain heavy oaken furniture; that gothic revival which brought back hoops to cage women and later bustles to make them look some matronly nightmare, were like the age itself (imagine, even fishing brides encased in some homily of the hoop or corset) notifying us that we had devolved in our escape from the elements towards a love of artifice. The harder men had to compete for the prerogatives of wealth which liberated them, the more they encaged their wives as priggish angels of the family, according to sociologists like John Demos. The Victorian epoch synthesized America's subtext of Puritanism from an agrarian past, with her new obsessions for a middle-class life for all, a life based on specialism, professionalism, currency, machinery and the accumulation of goods in the newly artificial settings of urbanism.

Our freedom from English class structure had liberated us to the mercantile expansionism of our own social climbing pretensions in the name of egalitarianism. And it was reflected in the pretensions of our aesthetics. The Civil War "liberated" us completely to the age of the Machine. If a tyrannical aristocracy which enslaved men was past its time, warred out, now the tyrannies of a new kind of technocratic democracy were "warred in."

A lithograph of Whitewash Village's Powder Hole harbor at its height from Ballou's article shows waterfront buildings, large and small, settled near a high-sterned, square-backed Banker style schooner, are directly on wharves, supported by pilings. One boat building is tall and wide, with a wide gable.

A photo remains allegedly of Powder Hole and Whitewash Village. The date on the photo's back is July 4th, 1897. The styles the women in it wear are the shelf bustle and Gibson girl look of that period. Confusingly, virtually the same fashions had been around in the 1870s. Eleanor Henderson, past president of the Chatham Historical Society, claims the photo was taken in the 1870s and is Whitewash Village after its heyday, before its houses were moved to shore. How many were left from the original settlement? How many had been built anew after the Civil War? Is it the Hole or is it in fact the area near Inward Point of the 1870s, called Middletown?

The photo shows houses which are one- or two-story half-Capes with the higher pitched roofs of the Victorian era; a salt box; and many small one-story cottages.

After the village was abandoned during the Civil War, many houses were flaked, cut into panels marked for reassembly, and barged to Chatham. Ten men could take half a day to erect a flaked cottage. How many houses were flaked and barged to town during the war? How many of these in the photo were the hold outs, harboring during and after the war, mackerel dory fishermen making do out of shallow offshore anchorages, weir men, and salvagers? The fishing village would remain something elusively different in aesthetic and architectural character than the mainland.

Eleanor Henderson said that more than a few houses on School Street once inhabited the place they may spy distantly from their roofs now. I walked there again recently, and my god, there was Monomoy from each era. The houses included some in the photo it seemed: a doll house, not quite saltbox, a three-quarter Cape or two, a number of those narrow, see-through-one-walls'-windows-to-the-other, late Greek Revival/Victorian Capes; some in white, some in blue; one of the shanty-sized houses from the half dozen or so in the picture; one a series of narrow small rooms attached to each other, with rickety black shutters and a black shiny door. There were no sheds near water, until I looked down to one of the area's large inlets: Behold cluttered sheds, a windmill and... now as I walked down below the hill, a boat house like the one in Ballou, but made in the 1900s of various panes of glass; complete with a marine railroad and an old wooden hull.

Houses clustered together, safe around the harbor; but over the dunes lurked a beguiling sea. What special excitement of nets, lobster traps, buoys, lures, boats clanked in the harbor. Right near the fishing shanties, the tools, and rope sheds, the boardwalks of wharves; maybe a wreck grounds, and everybody comes rushing out.

Fishermen up before dawn to take their boats out, assemble their lines and weights, their flaking and filleting knives, their racks, their ice, their storage bins. Their wrists sore from gurry, highliners troll under a smurry sky. A sailor uses a fake box, a cube with crisscrossed ropes and pegs, to weave together a frayed rope; to make a new net. The chandlery sounds are of hammers, of new steam benders and steam bellows reshaping ship beams, formerly cut curved out of molds. Cod is hanging drying on the beach. Clammers bend and hoe, dominated by the low tides, repeat the moves of back bending, hoe raking, 'til the clams become a coin, a wampum translatable to currency in their pails; sun searing the raker's eyes. Somebody brought in a catch by dory. Hauled it across the island by horse to the life station. Doried it to the mainland to be carted to a competitor at a fish house there. A solitary man brings his catch into the salt barrels of the shanties, later taking the pickled fish out of the salt and water solution in wheelbarrows, trundling it out of the fish house where it hung in poor weather.

The snow came up. The curtains came down. The wick went on (when the lights go out now, how incredibly silent it is, how different, connected, immediate, unanxious, luxurious) a corolla of a dim wick by which a young woman reads a book about the sea. And thinks about the pinks, greens, and golds of the colors here when the sun is the Ruler again.

(I am inside with the fresh air of sea change gone; the musty scent of furniture replacing it, the kind of web of mildew which used to pervade the Cape, in my nose. I can imagine living in the narrow hall of a mongrel half house, huge windows channeling light across the furniture; furniture collected by my forebears. Perhaps there was a gate-leg table from the Puritans' William and Mary time, lathed legs and dark oak, somber. The furniture itself a last of the oak in the old country. Maybe there is a Chippendale highboy from the time my forebears were Whigs, with a Hepplewhite wing chair and some pewter candelabras. Maybe somebody bought a gold-rimmed Recamier couch from the time of Napoleon, or hangs a mirror in the Empire style, convex, round, set off with gilded wood. There is an old campaign chest with its brass fittings; the designs painted on the lacquer suggested by Europeans to Canton artisans for export. Now there is the new, ghastly, rococo Victorian furniture, gothic chair in oak craved grapes.)

At the Inward cabin, plain pine furniture; knotty pine; plain as the winds here, planing the sands; plain as the freckled dunes alive like eggs with coming summer life; open and spare. No need for the refinements of a so-called gentle life.

Cabin. There is at the tip of the island now one cabin left; inside it you can look to the flats where the slicks of tidal pools come and go; safe in a warmly heated nest of a dune there are bunk beds, but they are a mess: tattered,

crumpled magazine, windows too tempting to remain unbroken. Irresistible targets up in back beyond the last dune at the south are the metal objects, red and white and triangular, with a long pole and metal balls, something like a sculpture – it is a wind instrument for the National Weather Service, or is it a navigational marker? I never can remember.

What better feeling then that of setting yourself on a high dune overlooking the flatlands below of marsh or moor, to wait for the soaring of hawks to pass – and to hitch a ride on their flight?

24

The Coming of the Modern World

Ocean Trade

At first, we had used considerable available eastern resources for essential needs. It is possible that those, renewable as they were, might have replenished themselves. However, since the Revolution and in particular the opening of Canton in the l780s, we had continued to either export our legacy of raw materials outright for luxuries such as tea, porcelain, silk, or we had translated them into other exportable commodities. The practice continued through the worldwide expansion of the 1820s and 30s. Thus, as the power of sail had opened increasingly global trade to us, we had diverted more and more materials once available for primary needs to supply the secondary demands of trade; so much so that now they were seriously depleted in many places.

We had created a trap: We could have subsisted without world trade. It was at first a wealth-creating adjunct, a psychologically, not an ecologically mandated, imperative. In the 1800s, it was a reaction to the poverty of two colonial wars. But as local primary resources were stripped, and secondary resources became limited as a result, we were stuck in dependency on southern, new western, and foreign markets, increased for the "production" of necessities. To get construction quality lumber, we had to rely on Maine and Georgia. As overused farmland in the east, used for both grazing and planting, was eroding away, as cut down trees and overused lands dried up waters on the surface and beneath the surface – adding to more erosion – more edibles needed to be imported, especially cattle for meat to eat. These and corn and wheat started coming across the Appalachians. We traded away the last of what we might have conserved – fish, locally milled wool from sheep which eroded lands, pitch pine cut and manufactured into turpentine, and so on.

By the 1840s, instead of ships bringing back a concentration of luxury items such as wine, linen, spices, exotic woods, furniture from Madeira, India, China, Japan, now they began to concentrate on carrying basic

needs to the east coast of the Americas, such as from India, cotton as well as hides to tan and to use in the New England shoe business. Clipper ships let the California gold rush open the far west for exploitation by the Forty-niners and those who followed. Just as the east began to concentrate more on importing basics in the 1840s and 1850s so too, functional furniture and prefabricated houses of a sort would now be taken to the far west which had an intense need for basic goods, fast. To supply needs both crucially actual and psychological, the greed rush was on. Locally the coastal trades became essential to bring necessities, which the area could no longer produce, to the Cape. The sea still ruled. But it was more and more a national sea.

At the height of Whitewash Village, modern America had come into being. Shipping, as we have said, had expanded from the North Atlantic to the whole of it, beyond to the Pacific and the world. As we had become accustomed to the addiction of material goods via the sea's mercantilism, manufacture on land could replace some of the needs, essential and non, to which the era of sail had accustomed us. Mercantilism via the oceans impelled mechanism on the land: One might say that the seas, by increasing access to, and satisfaction of, our material wants, became not only the eventual handmaiden of, but the immediate cause of manufacture, as dwindling raw resources demanded mechanistic solutions to our increased secondary needs.

In other words, the linkage between land and sea was that shipping had increased our appetites, which increased usage, which engined eastern scarcity. Scarcity impelled more trade for necessities which motivated more trade, which intensified still more use, which released the genies of Manufacture and Invention, which released urbanism, which was supported by the food and raw stuffs of the west, which encouraged emigration, which in turn sparked the cycle all over again.

National Trade, the Land

By time of the first lighthouse and of Sandwich Glass, and of the opening of the George's Banks, as we were increasingly trading with the world via our square-rigged ships, immigration to America increased. Emigration west began. President James Monroe had announced his doctrine to the world, to keep the European powers out of the Americas from Tierra del Fuego to the United States. When Whitewash Village began in the 1830s, Andrew Jackson not only invented patronage but he started his terrible removals of the native peoples north of those he had warred against in Florida a few years before. Andrew Jackson began to surround the original inhabitants of the Americas in a kind of bi-coastal pincers, with

the Removal Act allowing usurpation of lands in the west, as he forced the Cherokee off their lands in the "Great Removal," exiled, expelled, from their farmlands in the southeast to take the lethal march of the Long Walk to retention centers in Oklahoma.

We had nibbled the east coast frosting, eaten the icing of foreign trade, and now approached the layer cake of the lands. From acrimonious local disputes between Nickersons and the Plymouth General Court, conflicts enlarged into wars over lands which were not theirs in the first place. Oregon was purchased from yet another nation, Russia, who did not have the rights to her. Nobody asked the Klamath and Coos. Started were a chain of bounty hunts to murder the remaining northwestern tribes, take their lands for gold. The wars against Natives of the plains would commence and not end until the late 1800s. (What does it do to a nation's sense of self when its basic premise is false? What course does that set it on?)

American riches, either primary (the gold which was alleged to pave the streets) or secondary, the insatiable commencing urge for goods and inventions, became perceived by Europeans oppressed by ancient royalties as a way out; packet boats sailed here (a profitable business enterprise) crammed with refugees. (Even Chatham saw a mild rise in population, an influx of strangers and new ethnic and cultural groups.)

Just as scarcity, the denudation of English forests, the limitations of ownable land had compelled emigration to America, now it would incite it across America. Not only limited land and materiel, but the finite parameters of the new economics created dearth. Beginning with the crash of 1837, over-inflated credit, over-speculation in land, in gold, a fluctuating currency base accompanied by political corruption would take the increasingly interdependent, increasingly Americanized economy for roller coaster rides. The troughs in the economies of the east would force displaced people west, often into the hands of the same financial-political forces they thought they were escaping from.

As people traveled inwards from the east coast to cross the Appalachians, as they travelled inwards from the West coast, as they began to venture up the no longer French Mississippi, their fragmented new lives did not provide the kind of subsistence which village life had possessed in Europe. They needed essentials and non-essentials from areas in the national lands which could supply them.

Trade allowed populations to expand off the land. These humans in turn needed still more essentials. Increased, on the move populations, continued to need more goods faster than they themselves could produce them. Manufacture could supply the new demands. Urbanization would follow in its stream.

As the east turned continuously elsewhere for food and fuel, the west of the fur traders – to the Mississippi beyond the Appalachians by the 1840s and 50s would supply food. The enclosure of the middle part of the nation, expanded; where cows, railroads, the telegraph, barbed wire, soldiers, would split nations across the Mormon Trail by the late 1840s, early 1850s. Into the very heart of the country, by the Civil War, the Europeans dragged their corn and cows and horses. Always intruding on occupied lands, their new strains of food, their domesticated animals stressed the natural balance of what those lands could hold, the populations they could feed.

By the 1850s, the battle for resources of land and in the land was on, even as the trade by seas expanded for the rest of the Western world. As the 1850s enters, America is, if not less and less global, at least using more and more American raw material. The village at Monomoy flourished where and when the sea was increasingly used in the service of a new nationalized exploitation of American farmland and raw materials. The Age of the Sea was now the Age of the Land. Land would dominate for decades as a nation continued to turn inward.

The 1800s had to go on to redefine the difficult distribution of necessities, as well as the mechanisms of that distribution. The nation contemplated the transmission of her interior goods by railroads. She began to build them, connecting sea to river to railbed, turning the seas inward towards the lands, the rivers outwards towards the seas. With the opening of the Far West by the new ships, and of the plains by stagecoach roads, to be followed by railroads after the Civil War, we could facilitate the change in focus. The resources to supply necessities which we had depleted in exchange for global goods, could now be in part restored from within our bounds. And we could make fortunes as well. The height of the Village would see a new National America.

Manufacture

A subsistence of an agricultural people in its basic needs would, in America, not maintain its stasis. As the population expanded, land contracted; access to new geography was impelled. But if the populaces' basic appetites galvanized it to take land, its psychologically increased need for a surfeit of wealth or power compelled it also continuously away from a sufficient subsistence. The addiction to goods which global shipping had given us now could be appeased at home. It was not enough to take land; resources such as lumber or gold had to be accumulated as well. Not only could basic resources create wealth in themselves, but (as before) they could create wealth through the commodities they, as transposed, translated, or manufactured items, could create. Control over a singular

resource or invention could be wealth. The control over a market for a basic need, or a created one, would be the way to power. Manufacture increased, even as our desire for goods followed.

Too, when basic resources were used up it was inevitable that expansionism be pressured even more to turn not only outwards but inwards. Even as agricultural population became the trick rabbit which, once pressed, released hordes, so too did the new mechanical exploitation of raw resources by invention. Alchemy: someone would discover that more could be made from less, that coal could make steam turn wheels to make alloys to make thousands and thousands of objects to increase "productivity" and "wealth."

Mined silver and gold discovered, further opened the blood wound of the west. With the new capital came new things to capitalize: the new industries for the Inventions. Gold was the blood which powered the new thrusting hands and moving body of industry. Not only did immigration increase across the lands, from Europe and the east for land itself, but Invention was more and more released from the hands and minds of people whose fragmented population bases had created a need for goods to be produced quickly and out of range of communities no longer able to sustain themselves.

The motivations of scarcity, fragmentation, the accumulation of wealth through materials as is, and transposed, found that the intensification of use of patches of singular resources in specific areas, such as farmland in one state, a forest in another, gold in another, can be traded out to a wider base. Food was intensified in its production by new machines: the John Deere plow, the McCormack reaper, tractors. Factories were needed to supply not only masses of basic needs such as clothing for bigger populations, but new implements. Manufacturing could increase the use of an intensified production or mining of raw stuffs, creating many objects from a single raw material such as would begin to happen by 1859, with oil. Without trees, we looked within the earth to coal, and later to oil; to convert the very bowels of the earth to fuel for these the manufactured; fuel later, for the means of transporting these.

We could nationalize for the time being, our gathering of resources; we could dig gold out of the body of the rocks; grow fatted cattle on golden grasslands, use steamships and then railroads to transport it; plow with new McCormick and John Deere reapers the planted wheat; cut timber in the far west. *With new capital we could place bounty money not on colonial wolves but for the deaths of the inhabitants or their meat; by manufacture of inventions, we could control spaces and time with information sent by telegraph, use new weapons and untold bodies to wipe out inhabitants in*

the way. Soon we could bring in soldiers by steamboat and by rail car.

If necessity had once been the mother of invention, now began the rush to make invention the mother of necessity. Nonessentials had again become our meat by western expansion, by new materiel discovered, by manufacture. A cultural mandate – exploit rather than subsist – had somehow been born of Europe set into a land of promise and limitations, to create expedience, and it now reigned, ruling us with a dependency on strangers from whom we would purchase our needs and luxuries. The name which the Lakota of the west gave to the invading whites, as "fat-taker," "wasichu", he who took the best part of the buffalo, leaving the waste to rot unused, was very appropriate. While the first Americans took only what they needed, the new Americans said "I take what I need" with no understanding of what that meant in terms of a whole community of man and earth. They took everything they wanted and gave back very little in repayment.

The creation of goods through manufacture intensified during the age of the land. A national land interconnected by machinery of wheels, rails, motors, further stripped resources, intensified production – in both primary agriculture, and secondary manufacture – while allowing the expansion of populaces on a new kind of secondary economic base outside of agriculture, which, while they expanded numerically, needed more and more. This led the nation, after the Civil War, finally into another global era, with sea, air and information interconnecting the smallest geographical mote to the largest empire. Like wheels, the same forces spiraled once and again and again.

Local Indians who became whalemen and fishers, who had volunteered for all the wars as soldiers; fishermen who became capitalists, captains who sailed many seas; had been not only skillfully daring, but relatively autonomous. Tribesmen had found freedom in generalism: many skills within the natural world meant independence. The early New Englander had followed in that path to a degree, but increasingly had become Economic Man, dependent on the modes of specialism. Converted into fuel or product, the world became more and more a factory, with even food and shelter, pieces of a mass-produced organism. The fewer skills man was compelled to use, the more clannish he seemed to become in a kind of self-defense against his precariousness and his limitations; the more intensely he competed for My land, MY ship, MY profits, and the egalitarian ideal became remade into classes once again.

Civil War Interrupts Progress

Announcements in local newspapers called for meetings to abolish slavery as early as 1840, and even before on Cape Cod in its early newspapers, while the Village was in full swing. Manufacturing (alive since the early 1800s and even before around the south shore of Massachusetts for iron and rope goods) changed the power bases. Idealism and morality aside, slavery seemed absurdly outdated in an age of new machinery which could increase agricultural output (although it never really did that much for hand-picked cotton, ironically) and send the raw materials, which small farmers grew, of cotton and other crops, to factories in the northeast from the Mississippi valley and parts south. The new alliances of eastern money with western land, railroad, and cattle interests created different powerful groups, broke the south's power. The Civil War argued perhaps as much over markets for manufacture, over banks and capital, as it did over freeing the slaves. The battles between the control over labor and materiel in the face of the north's new manufacturing base would result in the loss of untold lives.

Massachusetts and the Cape had been herself slaving and a leader in it from the late 1600s, transporting cod for molasses and rum for slaves, to and from the West Indies and Africa. Although laws prohibited slavery after the Revolution, some slaving as a business went on from here, until about 1810 (and some scholars say, beyond). However, the Cape also was strongly Abolitionist.

I look out the slurry glass of my long windows in my odd house of no particular design. There are fishermen in Bankers. There are great three-masters. There is fruit brought from Europe. There is still farm produce, farms on the Cape; water pushed the wheels of clothing mills, rather than grist or sawmills as in the past. Windmills are fewer. There is a pause in the pace of the old ways. A time when after conquest, a nation becomes pacific, relaxed, into its ways, even traditional. Then another pause and a wrench and a move out and forward into a new age - one of machinery, factories; one in which the latent motivations which caused a new world civilization in the first place, assembled to come to the fore and distress the populace, leaving wars and pollution in its wake.

From the earliest Age of the North Atlantic, through two centuries, Monomoy herself had been a creature of her north self. Her southern pole expanded when a lighthouse hid behind the dunes and the expansion into Global Seas culminating in the 1830s saw a small village. Through the Era of National Seas and Western Land, beginning in the 1840s when an inward movement across the land mass of the continent occurred, to

the Age of Local Fishing and the Age of Industry taking off in the 1850s, that Village had seen tremendous changes both on the mainland, and in the world she heard from at her boarding houses. After the Civil War, the currents of the pre-war world would entwine to create the modern world. She would become for a while a place of her bleak north again, in an America both increasingly national and global.

25

The World of the Flats
Birds and the Brant Club Shooters

The sea is always at the edge of you, always nibbling the edges. There is a lighthouse. Its arcs of light make transections of the gloom. Bugs smash against the window. Migrating warblers are found dead beneath it. It gives fan-like reflections over the objects of the area. As storms of fall come, the light under the glass is often blown out. Lightships ring their bells, shoot off their whistles over the seas.

Even as new central heating warmed some mainland houses with steam boilers run by coal, Monomoy used wood for heat, for those very few who now came to her. The cool light of the last of the whale oil now being replaced by kerosene, still blended its scents with the pine smoke. She could escape from the onshore world, through the vapors, into the peace of fog and flats.

It is May. From the lone cedar tree on the North Island, home to a pioneer family of brazenly different crows, I look west to where Wreck Cove Tavern might have been. Were the crows outcasts from land even as were perhaps the ruffled-cuffed, lantern carrying, cloaked and horsed pirates and radicals who may have peopled the Wreck Cove tavern, so long gone?

Horseshoe crabs which have clung to each other under the highest of slippery tides, swelling up through every cranny in the island - when the ocean seems to want, with the moon, to engorge the earth, to sweep her back to an original state, cleansed – have laid their millions of tiny eggs under the sands; have begun to wander back under the sea.

The sandflats are squirming with shorebirds which move in teams, move as if they are marbles spattered out by a player's giant aggie. At high tides, clustered, soldered together, flats are the living stones of birds. Everything may be jumbled together in groups: some feasting on the horseshoe eggs; some resting with heads tucked into plumage, up on tussocks, some move in tandem; some expand like tidal wetness or run like individual molecules.

The ruddy turnstones have arrived, assertive, slightly hostile, rolling over the various bivalve shells lying about: clams, mussels, the occasional scallop or moon snail, or channeled whelk; rolling over the sand itself, looking for crustaceans, mollusk fry, larvae, insects, worms; rolling objects over simply to proclaim their dominance over other birds. These favorites of mine, russet, black and white calico birds look like a cross between an abstract painting, a playful decoy, a calico cat. These are like that huge glass agate, set to roll into the others to disperse them in a game of "nines." The sounds they make when they hunch over are like a bunch of glass marbles or pebbles being jumbled and rubbed together; a bit like someone talking over wires before sound has been able to be extracted into phonetics.

Left of me are the eggshell tanned sands and cream whipt dunes where gulls are nesting. There is a rank and ancient scent of guano, salt, fog, tidal flat, brown-crusted algae on the flats. Out over the mirage of ocean, amoeba-like shapes of peeps change, enlarge, contract, now looking like dots in an enclosure for the words of a newspaper cartoon, ready to assemble into words the land has spoken; then looking like something under a microscope.

Prima donna, chalk-white, black-capped, scalpel-winged terns fly in triplets; Tiffany baubles of fish flashing in their beaks to present to their beloveds. Hordes of beige, pinkish, tortoise shell, speckled black and white, sanderlings, dunlins, knots, sandpipers, turnstones, plovers pass in migration. Geese and crows pick at the leftovers. Merlins terrorize peeps, like jets flying in low under radar. Terns rise up on their mercurial-silvery wings at any disturbance. Gulls squeal that half nightmare, half yodel. Willets over and over circle and call in alarm.

It is damp, chaotic, chilly spring.

A sweaty, salty, lean memory of intransigent loss grazes me (a stomach flat as the clam zone, ridged mildly with the same musculature). This is Beringia, mastodons walked here. I remember youthful peregrine falcons, not quite equipped with the full black helmet of their regal race, pretending a skill they had not yet acquired: six of them chasing one elusive swerving sanderling. Ruffling their feathers upon landing, hunching their shoulders, they looked up my way in what seemed to be chagrin upon their faces striped with black war paint under the eyes to the jaw.

Nothing is here now of man, yet once as a Monomoyick launching out for small lead-colored whales, as a Lifeman dangled by swollen seas, as a fisherman in the crest of a fishy rip, even as a farmer in a spongey amber and beryl marsh, you were a part of salt oceans more even than of the land. Dug into the sand, long bow or rifle in hand, waders or leather covering on, or nude - you awaited those other creatures of a half-world, the ducks.

The swimmer-flyers approach, their joyous or alarmed "awks" rising under cover of dawnmurk, their regalia-like speculums bejeweled in the rising sun.

Shadow in the lee of the wooden blind, a wing, a goosenoise explodes.

Where I stand, as a seaman damaged by storm, seeking a lifehut, the lifestation hut may have been, surrounding me with its welcome enclosure, or, like one of the blown out huts on Coast Guard beach, left even today, its bedding refilled with sand, a small stove gashed in by the corrosion of salt, little may have been left to dry and console me but a ruined Humane house.

We have passed up the beach through the cave-like blow out of dunes to count birds. Here too, the Brant shanties were.

Market Hunting

In 1602, Gosnold's men saw near Monomoy's vicinity geese, pigeons, cranes, teals, bitterns, ospreys on the marshes; "hags" (shearwaters), petrels, gulls, "stearnes" (terns), cormorants, coots on the waters. They also reported Great Auks. "By the ship's side, we there killed penguins (auks) and saw many sculls of fish."

As flats break and fill in, salt hay is born again, the change from marsh to flat, beach to flat to marsh spirals, a cycle. Like smoke from the pipe. The smoke brings curls of birds, whirling to their places: shorebirds to the flats; geese, golden plovers, godwits and whimbrels to the grasses; terns and gulls to the beach and dunes; egrets to the thickets and ponds; Brant geese to the tide line at the eel grass edges; eiders to the sea. Each zone of nature, onshore, according to the light and the land – or in the varied temperature zones for fish off the earth in the seas – each niche in water or on land is like a tight band of color in a spectrum, a specific frequency in

sound, defining, revealing, containing possibility adapted over time.

Chatham native people shooting many arrows at once into a flock of Monomoy ducks or shorebirds might glean these for dinner. Some sources indicate birds may have been netted. (Indeed the Wampanoag culture hero Maushop's name may be derived from the word for net.) On the ponds, blinds of grasses could be set up. Reed decoys could attract ducks or geese to special arrows. Later, Thoreau described the ancient art of "gulling": make a fire with hog's lard and after the birds are attracted to it, kill them with a frying pan. Another method, extended from tribesman to settler: build an arbor, put whale meat on top; as the birds land, pull them through. (A similar method was used by Plains Indians for eagling.) Sacking was done at night. A lantern was swung over dazed, sleeping birds as they were simply scooped up into bags. Tribesmen and settlers alike might plunder the cornucopia of gull and tern rookeries for eggs.

Thomas Morton in the 1600s spoke of geese being shot at one hundred a week around Plymouth and the Cape; ducks "very large" falling at fifty a shot. Emmanuel Altham in the same period and place wrote, "a man with six shots has killed 400." Europeans introduced new kinds of muzzle loading long guns, often hiring Indians to shoot for them. Taken were astonishing number of passenger pigeons in the appearing clouds of their 12-year cycles. Taken were birds of the marsh, the flats, and fowl: migrating geese in April, in May migrating shorebirds; July and August returning shorebirds; ducks returning in September, geese in October. Now there are still a few, spare wintering Canada and Brant geese. Then there were many more. When the salt grasses turned green out of their dead gold hues, and spring was raw, moist, fluctuating, moody; when the beach plums frothed up in the back dunes, the birds came. You could tell when the hunt was by the season, by its scent of spring grass or autumn storm.

Before and after the beginning of pasture and farming, not only fish and shellfish but birds formed a good part of the local diet, shot especially during spring and fall migration. By James Audubon's time in the late 1830s, it was common practice to feed on any winged thing, even robins.

Starts and Stops

Through the 1860s and beyond, the Cape itself would have still less and less lumber to use for housing and fuel, less and less good soil for commercial ventures in farming. Sands threatened to eat up anything green. By 1862, Chatham's soil would be described by Frederick Freeman as so eroded that her bones would show many feet under the surface. The material dearth which had compelled men to scavenge for parts before and after the Village continued to affect how people ate. The Cape could

barely feed itself.

Starting in the 1860s, the Cape would narrow her sights, turn inward to survive. As the Civil War commenced, people had already begun to go back to a colonial kind of existence. When fishing and other economic activities shut down during the war, the kitchen garden, hunting, fishing for subsistence would save stomachs, while salvaging, clamming, market hunting maintain her cash economy. Capers would depend heavily on these autonomous supplies until the 1880s brought grocery stores and the mixed merits of economic recovery. Some of the Cape would keep its hold on nature as a means of protecting itself from hunger, straight through the 1920s.

During the Civil War, much of the strongly abolitionist Cape sent more than her share of men to fight. Chatham would send 236 men off to the maws of war, spending 27,000 tax dollars. The Cape, Chatham, Monomoy would suffer a decline of population during the war and immediately after. As fisheries waned and land was depleted, men moved away; economic depression ascended.

Monomoy would typify the Civil War and post-war aftermath of many coastal areas by continuing to aid the practice, by necessity, of self-reliance. But on Monomoy, the kitchen garden was throttled by sand. After Whitewash Village was more and more deserted during the Civil War, hunting and fishing shacks again grew up around the lifesaving stations at Powder Hole and Inward Point. The closing of the "Hole," the absence of people on the isle for a time may have allowed the abundance of birds using this place in migration to flock once again, undisturbed, causing a less populous Monomoy to become a storehouse for ducks, shorebirds and shellfish, as it had been for the Monomonacks, so many years before.

The Civil War had run some of its course, when in 1862, the Monomoy Brant Club was established near Shooter's Island by the Bearses to take advantage of large amount of fowl coming to the Common Flats; so many that George Bearse said the air between Monomoy and Chatham used to be black with wings. "Horizon covered with birds from Inward Point to Harding's Beach," one Chatham Historical Society notation says. (Since so many local men went off to the Civil War one wonders who was left to do the hunting. Those too old for war perhaps? Too young?)

Not only could these birds be eaten by large and small families alike as needed food during the economic slump of war, but they could also be salted down and sold to parts beyond, even as had happened in colonial times. Cash could be made as braces of ducks and geese by the barrel were shipped to Boston for restaurants on through the 1870s.

Dabbling puddle ducks are delicious, so mallards, black ducks, gadwalls,

pintail, bluebills (scaup), baldpates (widgeon), shovelers were shot as they flew towards fresh water at the south end of the island and landed at Hospital Pond nearer to Inward. Sought too, were bay and pond fowl such as redheads, ruddy ducks, butterballs (buffleheads) and especially canvasbacks, prized for their flesh. (Even now, this is a protected duck during hunting season, so decimated were their former yummy numbers.)

A village flowers, passes. Wind moans. The Civil War war wrecks the economies of north and south. At the time Lincoln is shot, shooters come to hunt on a place cleared mostly of human life, save in fall and spring. A Civil Rights act was passed despite President Andrew Johnson's opposition. Reconstruction promises revolutionary changes for Blacks, but many racist and venal southerners are opposed to it and begin to terrorize Blacks. Soon Ulysses Grant, prosecutor of Indian wars, Civil War hero, will be president, becoming involved in corruption scandals, and the decimation of western tribes.

The Civil War, that bloodiest of wars with one of the highest body counts in history before the World Wars, was perhaps the end of the dominating power of agrarian production over that of urban industrialism, even though the predominant populations of America would remain for a few more decades rural farmers. Financial and political power would coalesce in the hands of the burgeoning businessmen industrialists. These coalitions of power would create new groups of those who were exploited, while at the same time acquiescing to the new life: To create a fortune Americans would dedicate themselves to the manufacturing of every conceivable "need" in a veritable religious fervor of faith in materialism.

After the war, the emigration west was freed to pour populations into stagecoach roads through the belly of the country bringing settlers into taken lands. European arrivals crowded eastern cities, while still other European Americans fled from them, west. The westward movement would affect the land and the first inhabitants there, as it had done in the east; the movement west would affect the easterners.

After the war, Cape Codders would move inland along new roads, nearer to the railroad, ever extending since the 1840s. The local stagecoach had long since become the vehicle of the land as post Federalist roads, once King's roads, widened. For those who could afford them, personal coach and fours, or smaller surreys, trotted by. But the sea, for a while more, even with new land routes, often remained the local route of choice. Salted shorebirds, ducks and geese could run by ship to Cape railways and into market in cities. Birds travelled, iced, by boat. Refrigerated rail cars would follow the Civil War.

Market hunting, or the taking of birds to sell, intensified on the Cape and elsewhere during and after the Civil War, as soon as the introduction of breechloading Winchester and Remington rifles and carbines improved firearms. Many shorebirds which were not shy had never needed quickly repeating guns to end their lives. Dunlins, flying in tight formations, reforming after a shot, were called "simpleton" birds, so easy did their habits make them to assault. Eskimo curlews with similar ways had been since the beginning such easy prey that were named "doughbirds" for their use salted down as a basic food. Golden plovers had passed through Monomoy especially in autumn, and they were a delight of gourmets. They settled in the grasses of the high marsh in droves, so close together that one shot could kill many birds. In the 1860s, other brands of shorebirds along with fowl could also be slaughtered by scatter shot from high-powered, special canons. Nails shot from light weight, short-barreled carbines did a good job in killing numbers at once. (There is more than a certain irony that the Civil War had changed the technology of arms which would be used not only against the birds, but against the Cheyenne and Lakota. The weapons which went to war in the 1860s and 70s against the humans also destroyed by the millions bison, in in accord with the new political mandates of Sherman and Grant to eliminate "the enemies larder." To add to the fateful cohesion of post-Civil War destructiveness against man and the environment, many of the market birds, such as the golden plovers, were taken in the east on migration west to and from nesting grounds on those very bison covered plains of the tribes.)

1872: "Alonzo Nye of this village has quite a flock of these tame brant which he uses as decoys in shooting. Several of them are so well trained that when they see a flock of wild brant coming they will set up a vigorous quacking and entice them with gunshot, when, warned by the touch of a string attached to the leg, they will quickly retreat outside the range of the guns and allow their ill-fated victims to be slaughtered." A "perfidious mink" once ate eight of the 12 live decoys and paid with his life.

On the northwest, one permanent bunkhouse, a shanty with "husk mattresses," by 1876 held an annex with a kitchen and a parlor. "They used to have a refrigerator man to keep the birds. I never heard anyone say just what the refrigerator was like," a Chatham Historical Society notation mentions. There were few utensils. Food was ample if simple, often the goose you shot that day, sometimes by older weapons of muzzle loaders. Hard to believe, but guests apparently had to shovel up sand bars moved by the tides to keep them in place so the shanties and blinds wouldn't be flooded out. There were also portable houses and tents. Heavy wooden

boxes were stuck into the marsh as blinds for duck hunters, and both live brant and wooden ducks were set out for decoys.

Eggs, Feathers and Plumes

Mysteries exist. Had men plundered for food the flightless great auks noted by early explorers here in the 1600s? Nobody says whether Cape Codders did any egging. Likely they did in times of meager sustenance in cash or crop. Forbush and others report an "Egg Island" once off the tip of Monomoy, thought to have become Shovelful Shoal by the mid-1800s. From Newfoundland to Nova Scotia, inhabitants did take the eggs of shorebirds, almost decimating their reproductive capacity. Since the 1600s, colonists of Cape Cod gathered feathers, which had been sold off local hunts, for pillows and bedding. The 1700s saw feather voyages to Newfoundland for eider down. (Rafts of crisply black and white male, and cinnamon-feathered, female eider ducks inhabited, and inhabit still, winter Monomoy waters and may have been gathered for down. The usual practice was to take the down from nests where the females deposited them. Historically, although hundreds of thousands of eiders have wintered here, great numbers of them do not nest here.)

Was another kind of hunting going on at the Moy? In the 1870s, terns and egrets were assiduously hunted for their snowy plumes to adorn ladies' hats. All over the east these populations' numbers went drastically down even as the numbers of birds hunted for meat did. Was Monomoy plumed? While seafowl and shorebirds proliferated in the post-Civil War years, in the early 20th century, E.H. Forbush, that most charming raconteur of ornithology, wrote that although Monomoy at one time must have been a breeding place for gulls and terns, "with fishermen's houses, lighthouses, coast guard stations, cats were introduced and when the island became connected with Cape Cod, it became accessible to skunks and foxes and almost untenable as a breeding place for seabirds." Why then didn't these creatures, along with the feral cats and dogs, decimate the 19th century shorebirds and ducks? A curious note in a U.S. Fish and Wildlife tract says that isolated lighthouses such as the one at Powder Hole attracted numerous nesting terns in the past. Thus, in the l800s, it is possible Monomoy was "plumed." Although sources such as Nellie Blanchen, Forbush himself, and writer-ornithologist Arthur Cleveland Bent name Nantucket, Muskegat and Gardiner's Island as some of the places most depleted of terns from the Cape to Long Island, Monomoy plunder is a who knows.

(When one thinks of what harm fashion has done, in hats, from the beaver cap for men, popular in fur and felt, in bicorn and tricorn shapes for over two centuries, to the feathered hat for women; when one contemplates what, for

instance, sheep have done, endearingly nibbling away the lands of the Tigris and the Euphrates, creating a desert of a former oasis; causing in part the denudation of a good deal of England; causing in large part the emigration to places like Chatham where they again helped to nibble the place raw – all for fustian and wool – when one contemplates what cotton did to human beings in the plantations of the south for the sake of cloth, what the silk worm's little coz of a gypsy moth can do; what fashion did to the whales; or of what it takes to alchemize polyester out of oil, one might never get dressed again! The fashions of women, the gustatory table habits of men courting them, could help to motivate the protective laws for migratory birds. Indeed "woman, enemy of nature" was responsible for igniting the bird conservation movement, alight by the late 1800s to be embodied by the Audubon Society in 1895. Both pluming and hunting had motivated some people to try to save what was fast being lost. This American story repeats itself over and over again: Abuse it. Lose it, save it, almost and often too late.)

By before the turn of the century, what the Indians had had as a renewable resource, the population and profit pressures of puritan descendants had destroyed. Pluming exterminated, estimates extrapolate, from scores of to hundreds of thousands of terns and egrets, limiting them to thousands or hundreds. Ducks became so overhunted that the former darkness of rushes of them covering skies and flats, merging over traditional fly routes, became bleached, patchy. Shorebirds, such as yellowlegs, seemingly less well able to repopulate than ducks, declined precipitously. Local Cape Cod town ordinances did protect birds "from the sea edge through the marsh" as early as 1821. By the mid-1800s, the Humane Society had appointed itself guardian of local birds. In spite of these new conservers the golden plover were practically extinguished. Forbush writes that market hunters followed Eskimo curlews around in migration from place to place from Chatham to beyond, so intently that the last one was found in South Orleans in 1913 after a spectacular decline in numbers through the 1870s. They are now, for all practical purposes, extinct. Wetland birds such as woodcock and snipe to upland game birds such as the heath hen were damaged too, the latter made extinct.

Post Market Hunting

As so often would happen, a former necessity became a sport; hunting continued for its own sake, and for the sake of a good meal – with limits on bag numbers. The market hunters of the 1860s and 70s, by the 1880s and 90s, hunted primarily for R and R. They did so not only because the birds had declined, but because they could find work in the tourist, cranberry, or day-fisher industry and feed themselves by other means. Many who

hunted now were wealthy escapees from city occupations. Bunk house, mess hall, miscellaneous buildings merged in 1886 with another group of shooters' cabins. Tax was paid on the buildings though land under them was not necessarily owned. This place of storms, shoals, fogs, shifting contours would also be a place of absolute peace. Brant Club president W. Hapgood, 1896: "A rough clam shanty badly lighted, the soft side of a board settee covered with seaweed and a coarse blanket furnished the only resting place and shelter for our weary limbs during the day and night. Overwork, anxiety, nervous prostration is the record of too many of our deceased businessmen. Is there anything more useful, recuperative or conducive to longevity than a few days of rest and easy life occasionally at a cheerful camp?"

On Monomoy from the late 1890s when conservation was in people's conscience, if not in law, 9,000 birds other than geese, apparently including both shorebirds and ducks, were shot in 34 years. (Between 300-400 a year. Not a horrendous amount for ducks, but a threatening amount for the shorebirds trying to recuperate.)

Big commotion when the first cold weather "coot" (scoter) spewed out of the sky in their quavery, spittley streaks, to settle, marking the return of the other seaducks. Oldsquaw, scoter, eider are supposed to make pretty fishy eating but they were taken for stews and for their feathers. (The classic way to cook "coot" was to boil the bird in water with shoe leather, then eat the shoe leather.) Canada and Brant geese were prized for food and were mainstays of Brant Club hunts in the late1800s, taken on the clam-laden Common Flats at the north end of Monomoy, though the take in 1883 was only 46 birds because of changes in the "Common Flats" between the isle and Nauset. An 1886 gale would blow out the flats. But in 1887 it was noted, "Clouds of Brant are making their appearance and the sportsmen are after them with their long shooters. The beach hotel is open and is headquarters for the shooters." By this time, "They used to have spring shooting only and for not too long a period." In 1889 the historian's diary said: "The brant killers have arrived in force and occupy their buildings on the beach where they will remain for two or three weeks during the branting season."

In the 1890s, during economic recovery, city-folk used this insider's spot as a club. In 1898, the year the Portland Gale raged, the year the Spanish American War gave us global naval power, the year steamship cruises were offered for under 100 dollars to the swells and not-swells alike, it is noted that the Monomoy Shooting Club, a rival to the Brant Club, offered wonderful accommodations, and serves "some of the most prominent people of Boston." In 1898, William or Billy Bloomer would become the

proprietor of the Monomoy Shooting Camp, a rival to the Brant Club, with good food the draw he offers: he has an "able lieutenant in Josiah Hunt who serves the dishes dear to the hearts of the sportsmen."

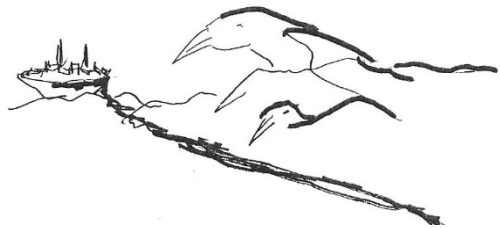
With the great auks before them gone, the last passenger pigeon died in 1914, carrying its whole race with it only years before the Migratory Bird Act effectively began to protect wild birds. The Migratory Bird Act, written in 1913, made into a treaty with Britain in 1916, passed in Congress in 1918, declared constitutional in 1920, only began to take effect in April of 1931, and was effectively enforceable only after a treaty with Mexico was signed. (Birds need to be protected not just on their summering, migrating and breeding ground, but on their wintering ground. Mexico winters many shorebirds, but parts south winter still more where even now, they face threats from market hunters, habitat loss, pesticides and so on.)

In the 1920s, J.A. Nickerson remembers a trip to the Brant club on Shooter's Island, one mile "short of Inward." The place was a hollow with lots of aspen trees (!) "silverleafs." Spring shooting had been outlawed, but there was still a gunner's assistant with a cook for the fall shoot, and three buildings. "The shooting was done from sink boxes, off the outer edges of the marsh and hence were usually under water at the top of the tide." The blinds were big enough to hold two men comfortably until the water of the tides filled them. Then one would have to wade, using a metal stovepipe 4" long, fit into one's boots above the knee, which was averred to enable a man to slosh about without getting wet.

Hunters in the 1920s could bag 200 geese in a day. Protests against the Brant Club which started in at least 1923 called the huntsmen "killers." Hunting then took place mostly in the spring. By the 1930s, spring hunting was unlawful and a limited fall take was allowed instead. Although other notes bear witness to the lack of overhunting, still Chatham citizens made vigorous protests at a hearing in land court at Barnstable against a petition of the Monomoy Branting Club for a registered title to Shooter's Island. Some Chathamites were attempting to stop even the limited bags even as another threat to the birds was revealing itself, that of oil.

In the 1930s, fatal eel grass die-off, most likely caused by unregulated release of oil from the bilge pumps of the new motorized vessels, severely limited the duck and Brant hunt by destroying the fragile food source of many species. In the latter part of the Brant Club's 70-year or so history, occasionally oil released from steamers could kill fowl by the hundreds and even thousands. Thoreau asks as early as 1856 what oil was doing to Cape fishing. The response from locals was that oil was useful to smooth

the stormy waters and bring the potentially wrecked back to shore. Oil, both fish and petroleum, was used to "see" the sea clams. Bituminous coal mostly ran the local and Trans-Atlantic steamers from 1819-38 and on. In 1849 oil began to be manufactured from coal shale. By the 1860s it was being drilled for. In 1879, Standard Oil Trust was formed. St. Peter's birds, and the stuff from Pierre the rock, had something in common, for those who look for messages in symbols: Petroleum, like the petrel itself, could walk on water. But the rock oil could destroy the bird which itself, excreted an oily substance from its nares.



In 1938 those laws enacting the Migratory Bird Act, were firmly enforced, preventing the "Brant killers" from shooting. Soon after, the shacks blew down anyway. Eventually, Shooter's Island, the piece of Monomoy which held many of the cabins, as if cooperating with the new laws, disappeared.

The long muzzle points, specially rigged to take scores of nesting terns to take advantage of their mobbing behavior. Many birds besides terns seem to come to the aid of a downed cohort, making them easier to shoot. Sometimes geese will stand by a downed mate on a gloomy wintry silver marsh for hours and hours. Walk to the freshwater marshes and shoot them behind the fog. Walk to the flats and lay in wait for shorebirds. Bag barrels of golden plovers for the gourmet tables of urban restaurants.

The idea of the tri-corn'ed, ruffled bloused, breeched and tighted hunter, sporting his muzzle loader, waiting on a tidal creek in his flat bottomed scow until dusk, to melt with the shadows and to take a brace of geese or ducks for the hearth roast, is absolutely appealing; and the image continues from Monomoy through the small shacks of hunters throughout the deserted dunes of the Cape to "The House on Nauset Marsh" and beyond; tucked behind the heather is an image of that precious ability to survive and to enjoy off the languid land. It is only when that image changes to one of intensified hoarding of fowl or fish, for the sake of exchange into coin, that the image loses appeal for me, because the hunting loses its place in the natural, manly, mystery of the scheme of carnivorous predation

to become a piece of the world of merchandise.

(Yet it is ironic to me that some of the very nice people who now protest the shooting of anything for any reason are so many of them so much a part of the mercantile world. They belong to the supermarket, thinking to buy and sell their natural experiences, their tours of the world to new places for viewing birds – even as they buy and sell the rest of their lives. They never consider how much harm this lifeway's trap does to the natural organism of the world; seeing a disjunct piece resulting from the problem as the problem, out of joint in the context of time – rather than taking a bird's eye view of the whole.)

Up with the grey feathered dawn; the marsh somber; a piece of the wetness of the morning if the tides were not all out, of dew, condensation, rain and sea; part water, part man, part duck; earnest with contained aggression, like smoke from an ember, as I have seen them on Sandy Neck and Chatham in their time. Cloudy clumps of low bushes, dew-still and deer silent; until the quickening harks of ducks. Wettish with damp, cold, smelling of algae; the gloom runs like a ghost sail in wisps across the bumpy sleek silk of the sleepy flats. The concentration of the hunter eliminates other thought; the peace is physical.

The sky puts on some plumage of morning pinks and yellows for a minute, then conceals it behind closed grey dappled wings. In come the calling geese, the thrilled, excited, quacking ducks, feet descending to ride in with ballasted wings spread to shallow waters and the flats; and then your gun dismisses its shot, and you will them down, as the shadowy objects slip from suspension, no longer held like planets by gravity, by winged magnetism spiraling-down for your fire's red sizzle, for your delicious dinner tonight as the charcoal breasted hush of sky descends again, thick, brood-downy, winged.

Waiting, watching for the autumn arrivals within a piece of the dawn for the dusk, you were rewarded for your patience, warmed by a special drink named "the Monomoy," a hot rum concoction described by J.A. Nickerson which became so famous it made its way to the Ritz Carlton: a lump of sugar, 2 drops of angostura bitters, some rum, lemon, 3 cloves, boiling water. (But some of the islanders like the "i" Eldridges are teetotalers, whilst some, such as the "e" Eldredges, are not. Some have conformed to the precepts of the abstinence movement which will lead to Prohibition; some have not.)

The chill is so gnawing there, so uncomfortable as the horse light plays over the raw dunes, palomino sand flanks, marsh hay manes, pink satin skies, that you would like a stiff warm toddy. Then with a crisp fire in the hearth, let the cold confusion, the vagaries of snow close us in with a "Monomoy" and with her fresh Brant goose for dinner.

Birds Birds

When they returned (brant and others have never regained their former numbers) their migration patterns had changed subtly as well, especially after the breaches of 1978. Shorebirds fluster and cluster, clutter on the north. Ducks beat not into Hospital Pond, no more with us, but directly to manmade potholes on the south, reminiscent of those of North Dakota's high plains with stiff straight reeds like long musical notes shifting near curved brush. The Common Flats once stretched out apparently for near a mile towards Morris Island. Now remnants are north of the islands and at Godwit Bar on North Island's northwest side. Sometimes at low tide one can see bared sands and mudflats similar to the past. Amazing that these indistinguishable drifts of flats, such as Godwit, should become famed landmarks to birders. Sands, like speckled eggs, bearing birds, bear their history; twines of tied together stars of birds in a gauzy, orange sunset... Strips of eelgrass recall brant geese to old sites. Scoters still come into waters all about both isles.

In the 1980s-90s, Monomoy, according to Brian Harrington, head of Manomet Bird Observatory, ranked "among the top 10% of shorebird sites (in terms of maximum seasonal counts) from a survey of some 600 locations." Birds make a single solitary stopover here before continuing thousands of miles on, often to places in south America, eating up enough invertebrates to gain themselves 50 to 75 percent of a weight increase. The Atlantic Flyway has fewer major staging areas than you can count on two hands; areas where birds en masse stop before going north or south. Data collected between 1972 and 1984 reveal Monomoy as a "critically important staging area to shorebirds, ranking among the ten most used sites in the U.S."

In the 2000S, From Canada to Virginia, the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) cited six stopover sites as especially important to migrating shorebirds: Monomoy NWR, Bay of Fundy in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, the Great Marsh on the north shore of Massachusetts, Edwin B. Forsythe NWR in coastal New Jersey, Delaware Bay in New Jersey and Delaware, and Maryland-Virginia Barrier Islands in Maryland and Virginia (WHSRN 2006)." Though in the 2020s shorebird populations are declining Monomoy seems to be holding its own with scores of thousands migrating through.

Turnstones, knots, sandpipers, plovers which congregate on Delaware flats before flying to the arctic circle and beyond in spring will not use Monomoy. But those who do not stop in the Mid-Atlantic area may well use it. There are simply not that many places where they can fatten up on crab eggs, larval worms and clams, and other invertebrate snack packs.

Migration may be one of the biggest proms and social events in the

natural world. Is it possible that fast-nesting birds start to pick up their mates, or renew old ties, on their travels? On North Island little freckled chunks of bird flesh run to and fro, probing into the flats with various sizes of beaks; each species adapted to a niche in the intertidal zone, each sex adapted with a slightly longer or shorter bill, slightly larger or smaller body size, nibbling their fast-food packs, instant worms tippled up and slopped in. Ornithologists have demonstrated that unique coloration, even special marks on birds will confer leadership, dominance on them. Gulls dyed red for studies on Monomoy to discern what garbage dumps they fly to on land have shown that some red-marked birds change to a higher rank. Yet mostly, they feed in an orderly fashion, few fights, little competition, cooperating, gently.

It is essential to remember that birds are communities of related beings; that they have a lifespan and quite possibly adhering social groups; they have traditional migration route stops which continue from generation to generation: that they travel from the tip of South America let us say, to the top of the world, or stray occasionally out of orbit from right hand Coriolis-continents of Europe to the left hand continents of the Americas. Perhaps they have a verbal lore, a genealogy, an oral history passed in the Morse of their speech. It is our arrogance to think we know.

Perhaps if we become the gentle and cooperative feathered wingeds for a moment, turning out above ourselves as humans, we might see ourselves as burdened human animals whose abilities are inferior to theirs; who might well learn better to be humans, from the birds and from the foxes or frogs as well, by learning better to be animal.

Here by contrast, under this cleansing sky's exposure, by these prairies of sands, I think of shelter; of a world of shadow in the woods containing the skills of hunter and fisher, of maleness and femaleness, of dream, all of which have now exchanged themselves for concrete knowledge, solid arts. Like steam from a vapor off the morning, off a sweat of sea, the soft touch of spirit rooted in the ground rises a feather throughout me to order a replication which nature and the desire it creates, commands. Enshrouded and embraced within a rich seasonal flow from sea to forest and back to shore, like migrating birds, like migrating fish, like emerging deer are the primal needs.

Let the shadows of hunted dewy woods coupled with the space of open places fleet with strange colored dawns, ignite a sensitive passion in us, which by its dreaming rush of desire, its heavy animal senses, relearns the light, the real soul: the true paradise lost of the freedom of the earth and sea.

Seasons come early here, spring and winter, about a month in advance of the land. A flushed cold comes out of nowhere, even as the beach plums'

lather of white flowers had risen and fallen quickly to let a surf of pink and white roses bloom.

Green glowing: at once you are caught within a cloud of chill green. The air becomes rain-sad; sea fills each pocket of land with its scent, staining out the day. Gloomy and cold, the sun is gone. The green scent of seas, a sorry, woeful presentiment of a scent, encloses me before the rain comes.

The mean temperature in January may be 24 degrees, sometimes warmer than the mainland. The area can produce a tempering effect on itself, yet it averages only about five frost free months, about one less than the mainland.

The terns shiver into their scallops of half-moon wings, align themselves on top of boats moored offshore or on the thin, moving islets of smokey sand between the Moys. Everything is in motion, winds, white skies, clouds, clots of sea. The sky clouds over; rain in the air makes gloom stick to the surf.

High seas hover beyond with boats of sail or motorboats, converting space into motion. Those white sails are like tern wings; some early schooners were even named "terns." However you chose to use the seas, as bird or as boat, those most aesthetic of nature's and man's creations signal a day in which we not only select our artifacts carefully, as the original human visitors to the isle did, or as terns with their high kekking communications do, but once again, share of a mysteriously fluid world. Cold and salty, half moist and half dry, you become a part of the place. You want to know more about the times in which this impudent place thrived. You begin to see the pastel shapes of humans interspersed with the feathery moods of the seasons. Here, I repeat the litany of seasons, counted like beads, the mnemonics of a wampum belt, a notched stick, a rosary – as my friend counts birds: Hunters might seek behind dunes, blue-colored animals, whales, with their last mist of a spout. Light.....might fall upon its global axis and roast and turn upon the spit of it, until summer was toasty, done, and whitened winter bleached out the circuitous sands, the gull guano, the dead bird skeletons, the wrack, the bacteria and sunset painting the flats, the reflected rainbows of the slim waters, the hatched eggs, the fractals of fragile and dried beach plants, the spitting clam flats.

Winter might appear in sanctified fog and shriven snow in the guise of gyrfalcon spirit, and one might remember those not-so-sturdy, mast-slanting "Bankers" leaving here in the cold for cod all the way to the George's Banks. Two masted schooners with their masts shortened in winter, gaff rigged, could be stirred around like cream in all consuming coffee and, by the will of winds ... destroyed. Only the fish would survive.

Warming was dormant at first, a time of emergence, a time when gold cattails and emerald sphagnum moss and rose pogonia in dune bogs

would awaken under the few short cherries and pines of South Island, and the prairie lands ringed with limpid dunes of North Island would expect their peeping, dipping, questing, light-shivering shorebirds and their riotous slivered, pale, hovering terns once again. One might remember the Cape which the Monomoyicks had known and which we had, with our technology and greed, lost only to sanctuary, like a terrified man running into the last available apse. "Whew, whew whew," the whistle, "Peolooo," the flute; yellow legs and plovers, bringing dusk, bringing fall, bringing shadow in their wistful, often melancholy calls...

Noble Superlative/ April hawks in wind

sharp winged winds, flecked and feathered with sun, dramatic fly,
like a kettle of fierce falcons on the rise. Hawks lift, pull me up
hitched on
their talons. High.

At once I am a sailor of the skies, baffled by brutal battling winds as they,
and looking down
see ships, cocoons of canvas butterflies, released upon
the slide of waves.

Froth, they dip into for their worth of hook
and line.
I pilot, overcast may stoop to find a fall from heights, the
mackerel squirming neath my beak's tine.

And curl and roll my wings beneath me,
lift once more out of the captive land, beyond the shore,
lost in the blind sheen to poring eyes below.

fly so upward now, release the packet of my scornful quick-shift phase
of eye on those below.
And thus, from their attacks be gone, to realms where excellence
its own reward is known.

what will it be like tomorrow:
spring, warm to charm and twine itself about me like a feathered wing?
or will it be
chill, to flay the soul and kill
the egg in nests?

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The World of the Flats
Shellfish

People had always "made" oysters and clams with smoke and brine, selling these or the fresh item in town. Although ice carrying smacks and sharpies had been keeping fish and shellfish fresh since the 1850s, commercial clamming, scallop and mussel dragging really developed when railroads provided cars with refrigerator cars to take fresh shellfish to market in the 1870s. These were the same refrigerator cars which allowed the cattle business to expand. The Cape Cod railroad reached Chatham in 1887, when the stagecoach which had run since 1854 stopped, but before then short branch marine railroads connected freezing plants to shipyards, joining them to the main branch of the rail lines for freighting.

From bait to the food stuffs shellfish would increasingly become during the Civil War, on into the 20th century, on Monomoy, if the weirs pulled less, when fish runs were sketchy, or birds were shot out, one could always clam. Historian Deyo in 1890 declared that "the business of clam-digging calls for the minimum investment of capital and the maximum employment of labor, hence it has ever furnished employment to many whose tastes or finances deterred them from embarking in other fishing enterprises. The old saying that there is no royal road to learning is equally true of clam-digging. Any man or boy not necessarily well-dressed, and equipped with a short-handled hoe and a pair of long-handled boots, is fully prepared to make the business remunerative." (He left out pails and a means of transporting the bivalves to sale.)

Clamming here, there can be miles of open flats. The area for your hoe is neither the land nor the sea, but that transitional zone where feet sink into wet tapioca sand, sucked in. Holes in the sand can house long necklaces of slimy ribbon worms, or the siphoned long necks of antagonistic, spitting steamers themselves. Clamming: the thwuck of the opened inches on either side of a hole; opened by the tined rake, whose four or five tines have enough room between them to fit over a clam; the unbroken clams

skillfully retrieved and plopped into the basket to collect like coins, like beads and wampum. Weighting down two plastic oil cans with them until you could carry one on either side, evenly weighted, back across the sands. The tides turn about, pirouetting into dusk and dawn. Sometimes a sun, low in midday, glares in your eyes, reflecting off the puddles, caught in the sand pockets, making sun and sea, sea and sand one. Sometimes tides while clamming at dusk make the slender waters become foil-shiny: sand paintings in blue powder pastel, pink ground up shell, butterfly. Emulsifying a human, surrounding you, demanding humility. (You are not bent like a supplicant for nothing.) The terns which have ignored you as you have worked, as you rise, spot you, lunge out of the lower sky, arrange their black caps at an angle to show off their beaks, fix their geometric silvery wings, and orange beaks kekking, flutter, hover, dive. (I remember having a nightmare of endless clams, endless digging, face to the sands turned down in a never-ending quest for clam after clam while the gulls amplified their "worra worra" noises.)

Out here the few people I had known during certain years were intimately connected to the place, like mussels on their threads. Naturalists absorbed in their work, counting, banding, creating ways to protect species, dissecting behaviors and their relationships to resources. Resource-reactive I called it, whether the reaction was to food, availability of mates, weather; whatever the circumstance, it created a condition, a set of reactions which affected the bird's life, the plant's life, the human's life, the rock's life.

Memories flop up to the surface, under the closed water of dismissal, like flirting mackerel through the rips. Bending over, blending with the reflected light lurching off the flats; clams at low tide spitting; dots of wet out of their siphons buried in the sands, they become one with the mirage of the place. A memory spits back at me of a man, once as lean as this place, with a spirit filled with some of the freedom here, but a heart linked to the social norms of the mainland. Perhaps conventional at last; brutal, made so by the exigencies of ego and survival which had evolved over time, back on land.

The sun tightens your forehead and cheekbone skin; picks at your nose; the salt works up a hunger and the heat makes a thirst. You want to leave the damp zones for the dry dunes. Sometimes that living tidal fertility hovers thickly, thick as a group of terns, uniting our sexuality with that of the algae and bacteria, they our cousins, before us.

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The World of Sunny Beaches and Water

The Middletown Resorts

By the 1870s, Inward Point below the old Wreck Cove at what was then called Romp or Flatfish Hole had become, as we have mentioned it would, a shallow harbor. A vast dominion of the famous Cape Cod catboats, complete with the new centerboards which enabled them to sail so deftly, used the shallow harbor to fish Monomoy, but returned home to Chatham at night. Into the 20th century, they would set pound nets in the morning, pull them up at night, return to shore with a full hold. Haynes Mahoney quotes an old timer who can still remember the Monomoy fleet of catboats returning from a daytrip, "their canvas turning to topaz against the brilliance of sunset."

In 1872 when the fall and spring Branters hunted for the market, most of the Monomoy full time population of 20 souls or so would gather off-season at Michigan or Middletown House, sit by the fire, listen to yarns and "draw deep of 'beach Comfort'." Many of these men were catboat fishermen, shellfishmen, or weir men.

Beginning now, many people were not surviving on Monomoy; instead they were reviving their spirits with sport at small resort inns built at "Middletown" south of the Middle Station below Inward Point. Pleasure seekers might cross by ferry for five cents, then wade and walk to stay at places like Bay View House, a small inn offering fishing, or they could walk eight miles to the Czar House near the old Whitewash Village. The Monomoy House, nearby, made famous by Ballou in the past, was where some of the weir-men stayed. It filled with visitors once more, this time not salts and jacks, but tourists. It was called, "delightful for those who wish to enjoy the cool sea breeze."

From these inns went excursions by small craft to see the men working the weirs, where, for example, squid and sturgeon were being taken by the thousands in the Czar weir at 3 p.m. one 1879 summer day. Inns served food specialties such as clam cakes, supposed to be so good that lobster

would seem tame by comparison. There was marinated squid followed by fresh berry pies. You might eat bluefish cooked especially for you by the inn owner, prepared with fresh vegetables brought over from Chatham. Czar House was run by the ubiquitous William Bloomer, cashier and treasurer, in "his tall white hat." (In 1842, the deed of the Bearse family to "Wm R Bloomer," probably this man's father, allowed him, according to the Chatham Historical Society, to "improve the land and building, but not to build any buildings on the one-half acre. This is the first zoning in Chatham, where the Bearses zoned the Bloomer's.")

How did the new occupation of tourism affect character? This was the beginning of the versatile Caper who did everything. No more the "buzzards" of wrecking – instead he picked a living out of the seasons. Paucity of land turned men towards the seas. Paucity of fish, in terms of the former numbers for the Bankers' crews of the past, turned men to innkeepers. Paucity created a kind of being here who had to do everything, all kinds of things to survive, to make the money to live, then even as now: to run a resort in the summer, to sell or teach or scavenge in the winter. Instead of being habitat generalists, they were a new kind of generalist in skills which used various pieces of the earth in goods and services to make the money to buy other pieces from other areas which used pieces. Scared, like fog shriveled by cold, like the shock of lanterns in exposed places – dreaming was for the natives who had had time and food enough; dreaming was not for the rest in the new age – too busy surviving, growing hard doing so.

No one knows what Middletown looked like. Virtually the only reports on it in its time linger solely in Chatham Historical Society records. Perhaps the inns were a bit like those rambling, multi-gabled, porched structures at Cohasset's summer resorts or left in corners of Sandy Neck, Yarmouth, or Hyannis near Long Beach. Or perhaps the houses were heavy-roofed camps, bungalows reminiscent of the public life houses. Or maybe they looked like the abodes in the single photo of Powder Hole, or as School Street now possesses those houses in time – but with even more of a high Victorian cast.

Of Powder Hole which had stayed a "landlocked brackish puddle," it was said in 1877 that, "a little opening in this sand pit now admits larger sized boats at high water." With the small harbor more or less back in service in 1877 "twelve or fifteen families" were living at the Point around the lighthouse. "Wrecking is one of the branches of business there, the old hulls of vessels lying around are evidence that there is occasionally something doing in this line. A new cable has been bought by the Monomoy Point Co. for the purpose of assisting all vessels that are in need. The house owned

by the late Heman Smith had been bought and removed to the hill top as a suitable place to store it," a Chatham Historical Society diary says, adding that lobstermen peopled the place, around the old Whitewash Village. They lived in the shanties, while some other fishermen lived in "more respectable houses." The fish caught offshore was brought into Harding's Beach across from Morris Island to be cured. Herring running offshore in fall still finds a ready market. Shad is sold to Cape Ann fisherman to use to catch cod with on the George's.

By the late 1870s, the inns were hopping. In the year of 1877, a notation says, "The new fish firm of Jo'n Slath'l is established at Monomoy. Their new and elegant warehouse is situated in the picturesque dunes that skirt the broad Atlantic and is in a sw by s direction from Monomoy light." (This note from a Monomoy diary, was a bit of a joke. For this was a six by eight-foot bunkhouse which friends had set up, almost capsizing their boat first; then being rained on their first night - their "virtuous candle" by the bed being extinguished.) In this same year the hatchery and other lobsters stored in their "cars" were found dying because of the "poor state of the water, entailing the loss of hundreds of dollars to the fishermen." Probably oil released from the bilges of new steamers had polluted the waters.

Pilot boats, catboats, and pleasure yachts sailed the inshore sea lanes. The new pleasure craft came into popularity after the 1850s and were now coming of age as the wealthy man's toy often competing in regattas near Monomoy. Out beyond, in the deeper channels of the sea lanes floated four masted schooner-barges carrying coal, while increasingly, new steamboats churned by perhaps carrying goods from the interior of the country. It seems that those 60 feet plus, 70-ton pilot and pleasure boats, the popular new rake-masted pleasure and racing yachts, could find enough water to anchor. In the late 1870s a diary stated, "We took a sloop to Monomoy Harbor where we occupied quarters in her cozy cabin" until morning. One report says that ladies from Boston were brought in by the sloop Snow Drop to the isle with a store of gingerbread and cheese on board. They were amused to watch the men pull weirs to which 19 new ones had just been added. The ladies would delight in the trips, refreshing themselves at various new "hotels" such as the Paris. Perhaps they are daguerreotyped in their bustles, corsets and cocked hats with veils, in long lost photos - like the single disputed photo of either the 1870s or 1890s which I use as a reference point – talking to lobstermen sloped against their traps at the water's edge. They went to bed at 8 p.m. to rise at 4 a.m., just like the natives.

Sunbathing was still looked at askance by native Capers: who would want to lie in the heat, doing nothing, burning in the sun, immersing in an

intolerably chilly sea? Sunning was barely tolerated by the late Victorian public. Ladies' skin was to be white; the undraped body was a thing shameful. In that age bathing costumes still covered most of the body. So, a wade or two might happen, but not the prolonged luxuriating popularized after the First World War. I have tried to swim here a number of times; the slick, pure, cold of the scalloped waters ejects my body, which usually can plunge into any wild and willing surf. Encumbered in a Victorian bathing costume, I would have simply sat on the long edge of the bone-colored beach, inhaling the wildness from the sea, lurking under my parasol.

As Sportfishermen Fish, Bluefish Rise In Popularity

Bluefish, with their sharp teeth and good eyesight, their flesh fat from gorging on other fishes, were, in the mid-1800s, worth about 10 cents a fish. They had been seined in the 1840s and 50s, gutted on site, leaving the backbone on shore. In the 1870s, they became, in lieu of other species, worth much more. Sails of commercial bluefishers tacked back and forth, gill-netting the now commercially important fish. In Chatham more than 31,000 pounds was taken in 1884 alone. In the years of the resorts, bluefish occasionally found itself spilled on the ground, dumped in a price dispute. With the general fishy atmosphere, this could make the place "not fit for the delicate noses of ladies."

Surfcasters could run their fish poles in the sands with a different kind of rig than what we see now, seeking the bluefish newly popular with sports fishermen. In early summer they could reel and pole the tidal creeks for the mackerel the bluefish chased, watching terns arriving flashing over the menhaden chased by the mackerel chased by the bluefish, even as the humpbacks and finbacks spouted their signatures, mushroom or geyser, swimming slower or faster according to their body designs. Casters lined the shores, enticing the striped bass young, the stripers in fall, the young snappers of bluefish in spring; bailing in the adults in late summer; luring fish to the haul with local mackerel and squid, with clam, with the cousins of shad and menhaden, namely, alewife and Atlantic herring. Fishermen could feel pulled out from the shore with the fish at the fast subsiding of the willing shallow tides or follow them out in small boats; fishermen had special luck catching bass at night. Not only were fish caught in their migration runs, but it seems many, including seabass, abounded then continuously. While the professional catch of the dwindling ichthyses became irregular in the 1870s, sportsmen could even still fish for pleasure for 10-foot-long sturgeon, before they almost completely disappeared. The Shortnose sturgeon is now extinct, the Atlantic sturgeon extremely scarce.

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Weirs Contribute to Fish Declines?

For the first decades of Captain Joseph Reed's initiation of shad and mackerel weiring in the 1840s, although shad fell off, the netting of herring, menhaden and mackerel had been a bonanza. Reed continued to put in weirs, laying in one of the largest ones off Powder Hole in the late 1860s, striving to rely on nets rather than coastal fishing for his take. Reed, Myrick Kent, David Lewis in partnership, had weired during the Civil War, here. Weirs trapped fish, while the bottom nets they held had to be pulled up.

Argued all the way to the Supreme Court in the 1870s by his rivals, Loveland and Thatcher. Reed finally lost his bid for a monopoly; the Boston decision was overturned. By 1878, the court deemed the weirs to be the common property of the town of Chatham. By application to the Harbor and Land Commission with a small fee, net locales were granted. And yet all the men reconciled and were reported as having drinks together at the Monomoy Inn at Chatham mainland after the court decision. Reed's bid for a weir monopoly failed in the Supreme Court, but he won a smaller victory. 1878: "Notice: all persons having any buildings standing on Monomoy Beach on land belonging to us the subscribers are hereby required to either procure a lease of the same or remove said buildings from said premises on or before the first of June next. Otherwise, they will be dealt with according to the law." Signed, Joshua Bearse, Joseph Reed, Myrick Kent, David Lewis.

The U.S. Commissioner of Fisheries for New England would investigate dearths of cod and mackerel as early as 1872. Is it the location of the schools, a disease? Are smaller fishes being destroyed by other fish such as the gluttonous blues? Is it, the commissioner asks, done by man by his pollution, the oil cast off by the proliferating steamboats, or by his overfishing? He suggests, but cannot prove, that weirs and pounds have decreased the spawning mackerel and menhaden. Whatever the cause, there is a marked decrease of finned swimmers on the south shore of the Cape.

Cod, which once had abounded by the hundreds of thousands in the 1830s, suffered notable fluctuations. Chatham in 1837 took 15,500 quintals

of cod worth $46,000 by handlining. Of cod she took less than 8000 quintals in 1845 when she was apparently fishing for mackerel instead, but her catch was back up to 15,000 cod quintals in 1855; in 1865, 25,000. In the 1860s the Chatham cod take dwindled. (Provincetown men, still whaling as well, did better fishing for cod farther out with larger schooners, carrying not the former crews of six to eight men, but up to 25.)

While cod had been overfished and was being out fished by seining after the war, mackerel was being weired out. Chatham, most likely out of Monomoy, caught in 1837 $9,600 worth of 1200 barrels of mackerel by regular fishing methods. A couple of hundred barrels a year was the usual average, however, except for 1839, at least by regular methods. With weir catches during the "Chatham Years" in the late 40s added to boat catches, numbers of mackerel in 1854 zoomed to 3000 barrels and up to over 6000 barrels in 1864.

In 1879, from Harding's Beach to the Point there were some 52 weirs depending on mackerel, pogy and various herrings. "The catch for this season has been very irregular; some have done quite well while others have been less fortunate. There are about one hundred men employed in this business which lasts usually about two months. They are located in comfortable and commodious quarters, in houses along the beach abreast their several weirs or businesses." In 1884, 10,000 barrels of various mixed fishes such as shad, are taken. Then mackerel, along with many of the smaller fishes declined substantially in numbers.

Captain Reed stated to another newspaper in 1887: "The great hauls of former years, when men could make enough to live on all the year round, and have a thousand or two more to stow away for future needs are hardly expected now." The total disappearance of mackerel at the end of the 1880s, reported by the Yarmouth Register in alarm, well after the Fish Commissioner had warned of such an event, was not unexpected. Laws restrained mackerel seiners, weir setters, from taking the fish in their June spawning season. It was too late. (By the 20th century the mysterious multihued mackerel fish would recoup, never to regain its former popularity, perhaps because, as Shebnah Rich suggested, untended to by chum, the fish were now not only thin in spring, but unfatted in fall.)

In 1891, Kent Loveland along with, but not together with, Joseph Reed still owned most of the weir sites, leasing them out. Said the Chatham Monitor in 1891: "Any man with ambition for weiring could put down traps. Like every other business overdone, it has become of almost no value now. Complexity of traps has so demoralized the fish that their habit has been interfered with."

Bluefish too, fluctuated; one source mentions their disappearance from

1764 until 1810, even less numerous by the 1890s. By the 1900s, bluefish had disappeared, apparently gill netted into oblivion. Haddock, pollock, scup, flounder remained in fair numbers during the other fishes' declines. But in spite of the fairly good sport-fishing, it seems as the weirs fetched less; the resort at Middletown shut down.

While Middletown and the Point resorts were closing, shutting down the middle and the tip of the island, at the north, Branters still shot in the cool seasons before heat and snow, for sport rather than profit. The bust in fish had coincided with the diminution of birds; both had contributed to conservation movements.

Birds would recoup some of their former numbers, as fish would. The hordes of the past would never come again for either species. By the time the elusive bluefish did return in the 1940s, Dana Eldridge with a friend, claims to have caught the first one returning to Monomoy in 1949. Unidentifiable, because it was at that point such a rarity, they had to take it to a marine biologist for an I.D. (He speaks also of small-mouthed bass in the freshwater ponds; transporting them to Eastham to restock a few ponds; of fishing at dawn watching the sun come up; of the change in gear from a snaky drail-line, to bamboo poles, to the modern casting gear with bails.)

Weirs are set again around the southwest of South Island now, looking like badminton nets for porpoises. About forty of these are businesses are set out catty-cornered to each other; owned, sold and leased by Chatham families, like that of Olympic skater Todd Eldredge. While in the past weirs may have been given out by lottery application plus a fee, now, E. Johnson at Chatham Town Hall told me that to get a weir one had to apply to the town hall, go before a hearing to decide whether there was room enough without blocking shipping lanes; whether there were fish enough.

The 1870s: The East and the West Are Linked

After the Civil War and into the 1870s, in the west cattle drives into the northern plains were routine, and wheat farming, mining and timber harvesting increased. More land was opened to homesteaders. Ad campaigns financed by eastern railroad interests aligned with the western cattle money, sold the arid and occupied west as a lush paradise to land-hungry refugees. Railroads disgorged new settlers and transported raw materials and finished goods. Factories and the market for goods proliferated.

With more mechanism and manufacture, more specialism was created, and capitalist entrepreneurs increased. No epoch coming would be free from invasive and pervasive technology. The Civil War had freed slaves, only to begin the relentless domination by a life of labor and wages, and, while many people sought land, many others coursed off the land to cities

to make their fortunes. The technologizing of greed in the name of the good life would addict farmers and urban specialists alike. They would willingly put themselves into the arms of the intricate and vulnerable new economy. Even the exploited did not realize that what they embraced was what could destroy them as Ecological limits collided with Economic imperatives in ways we still do not understand.

As an intermingled network was expanding, each part supplying a piece of the whole from raw materials to manufacture, the west and east were economically linked. He who owned the labor or the resources which labor converted into goods, or the transportation for them; he who financed these, owned power, and wealth. And because the nation was interlinked that centralization of wealth could cause national difficulties.

From the diary of Joseph Hardy, Monomoy lifeman and Chatham lightkeeper: "On August 28th, 1874, General Grant (then president) visited the Cape." The era of Grant was mindbogglingly corrupt. While resorters enjoyed Middletown, political scandal after financial scandal riddled the country. Eastern financiers Jim Fisk with his partner Jay Gould (who had interests in the New England steamships of Nantucket) manipulated the gold market causing a devastating crash of the economy on Black Friday of 1869. Jay Cooke, who ran a popular bank and brokerage firm, with ringleaders including Massachusetts politician Oakes Ames, seeking to capitalize on the conquest of the west, seduced the government and individuals to invest in western land, western cattle, eastern banks, and in railroad construction companies. (Ames had an ancestral relative, Fisher Ames, a Federalist reactionary who thought only the elite should run the government, yet had been a champion of fishermen's rights, and coined the then well-known saying that Cape fishermen were "too poor to stay and too poor to remove.") When the huge kickbacks which the banks and tax-financed government construction corporations made to the financiers and politicians became public, the overinflated junk bonds of their time went bust. Corporations went bust. State banks failed. Cooke's investment bank failed. Individual investors lost everything. The ensuing financial panic of the crash of 1873 sent thousands of homeless and disenfranchised easterners west.

As If In Punishment

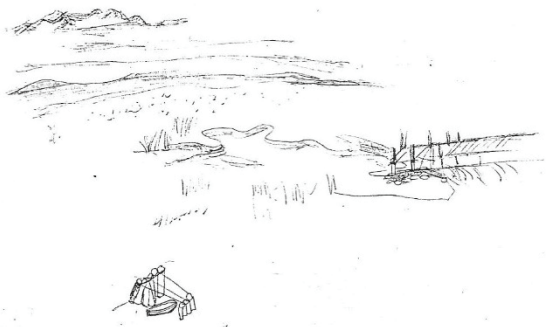
In the 1860s on as the United States continued war against the "hostiles," those men who had lived in the Americas before the Europeans, continuing the colonization begun in the east. As the west was being cleared for "progress," Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull were escaping incursions of telegraphs, railroads, settlers from the east. (It's alleged when the

telegraph crossed the Missouri River, its first message was, "Westward the course of Empire takes its way.") Game was becoming ghostly scarce while Grant and Sherman encouraged hunts against bison, slaughtering millions. The war on the Plains Indians, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Sioux, Kiowa, Pawnee, Comanche, Ute, Piegans, Nez Perce, not to mention the Navaho, Apache of the southwest, climaxed into its denouement with Crazy Horse's assassination in Nebraska in 1877.

Almost as if in a just curse for this, and for the chaotic effects of exploitation of the minerals, soil, woodlands of our nation, the depression started by the 1873 panic lasted 65 months. Unemployment grew. Railroad strikes paralyzed the nation. Economy, as well as Nature, would continue to kick back as there was less and less to go around.

The huge Bonanza wheat farms (forerunners of agribusiness) owned by bankrupted railroad companies, the expansion of cattle, the continuation of the building of railroads, the trains disgorging humans, all would minimize the raw immediacy of the West, turning as never before so completely, its ecology into cash even as Latin America, which had begun to be a market for export goods, and an area for exploitation since the 1820s, was quietly coopted to make rubber, banana, and other plantations for North American owners. The power we were giving away of our lives, to gain the benefits of the new manufactured goods, might give independent-minded Capers, along with the last of the Monomoiers, pause.

(And the Monomoyick spirits. Did they wonder at the constraints of artifacts of this materialistic heritage, wondering to where human strength and the human objectives of a search for mystery within life had vanished?)



While Massachusetts remained relatively solvent due to her shipping, fishing, mill towns, and localized investments, she, as other easterners, would find her fortunes in flux as the politicians and financiers lost or gained in their new western, and their incipient new Latin American ventures, and she would be more and more tied into a trans-American

and even global economy.

At the same time as Grangers in the late 1870s, angry farmers of the West, formed a united front against their exploitation by the huge, corrupt corporate railroad, cattle, and gold interests, the agrarian autonomy of the Cape, her ability to feed herself with local dairy and vegetable products became limited. The Cape could sell her products to places off-Cape, carried by refrigerator railroad cars; she would begin to buy her groceries, with bread and steaks created from the cattle and wheat, imported by those engines. As the conquest of the western tribes was climaxing, more and more agriculture could be shipped east, especially beef. Locally, farming took a downturn, except for things like apples, asparagus, turnips, and onions in places like Eastham. Cranberrying would become ubiquitous and use 30 percent of land made available for farming by cutting white cedars and draining natural bogs. Despite poor lands some dairying and farming rose up again by the 1880s, to supply local needs to people too poor to import them. By the 1890s, Cape Verdeans would farm strawberries in Falmouth. Cows were milked around Sandwich and Chatham was big milk producer. Ducks were "farmed" in Orleans.

Other New England areas had not only waterpower and good harbors for the still thriving shipping trade, but raw materials such as iron and timber. The Cape, though it still relied on fish, didn't have much to mine or metamorphose into goods, save sand for glass, clay for bricks, and bogs not just for cranberries but for iron, creating charcoal to smelt it from what was left of local trees; manufacturing some shoes, cloth and clothing continued.

On the Cape by the post-war 1800s, in many respects, nature was used up and washed out. Sparse and sandy, barren, and eroding, she managed to keep her head up until a new commodity could save her. But she had beaches and sun. She had what weary urbanites and workers wanted to relieve themselves with. She could sell the sunlight, the food, shelter, clothes trinkets which went with the business of giving people a refuge from the technical via the natural. The new phenomenon which was a direct result of mechanization and urbanism was tourism. It would help Monomoy to survive.

In the 1870s, while rescuers were at their serious task in new lifehouses and refurbished lighthouses, life was split into work and vacation. Hunting was not as Monomoyicks did for survival, but for sport. Fishing you did, not to sustain yourself and your clan, but (though mightily diminished here through out-competition by other areas) to sell, translating it to currency to buy your needs. There was more than another certain irony to the new tourism. In the 1870s nature had begun to be commercialized,

to be sold for pleasure. Men like Teddy Roosevelt advocated conservation while the Indians were being relentlessly attacked. Yellowstone, the first national Park, was created in March of 1872, to preserve wildlife and trees, four years before the subjugation of the Lakota, Blackfeet and Shoshoni humans who lived nearby. Nature begun to be museumed (muzooemed), categorized, catalogued; created as another specialism, carried on for currency coined by the Victorian age.

29

Still the Seas

On Water

Fog swaths, swabs the sea so that you could not tell it from the land. Strands of snow or rain, ejected by mean winds, could cocoon the sea to the flats, releasing the dead butterflies of shredded sails and hulls. As Eldridge's Coastal Pilot cautions, white lights can have reddish hues, and fog horns with whistling buoys' sounds move about, deceiving a sailor. One wreck log speaks of ships not hearing the fog horns – so padded were the sounds in wind, rain and vapor – and thus not knowing they were off course. Some stranded vessels were not even seen by Monomoy surf-patrols onshore. Even the lightships themselves sometimes did not see an alarmed vessel in "thick smokey weather." Thoreau speaks of thinking he was on miles of open sea, only to find he had been deluded by fog and there was a lightship looming almost on a collision course with his transport steamer. When missed by patrols or lighters, it remained for the distressed to be seen by fishermen off Point Rip and reported to the lightkeeper.

The World of Terrible Weather
On The Shore Facing the Sea

The waves and the fog could also consume the place back on the island, out of the unstable seas. Weather is still indomitable. A hurricane on the mainland makes the trees bend back to squeal in resistance. Here, on Monomoy, only the brush lifts almost out of the ground; the dunes switch their veils, tops dash back and forth like lost beige ghost dancers. Seas can suck out the land, pull up the sands, even as they can take a life at sea. The forty-foot-high blockades of dune ridges, stacked up, cannot withstand the implacable pressure of sand and water. A storm on the barrier beach can blow out lamps, dunes, change the place's shape, can obliterate wooden slats and studs. Camps on the ocean side were often destroyed by storms: first, eager sands would pioneer, piling up in mounds near them, and then seas would broach the sands. The bay side camps filled with water and

more or less exploded outwards. The pressure of sea froth churns up so thick, that it takes on a life of its own, like flocks of birds running through the breaks of the dunes, like thickened cream.

The one thing in nature which has ever caused me pique is storm on land. Somehow the absolute uncatchability of the winds is a catchall for artistic frustration, for the absolute elusiveness of capture of anything outside and beyond yourself which is vast and powerful. It's as if wind can take back for earth the unnamed "I Am," in a dominant control. Perhaps man has been in a simple battle: to prove himself more lethal than earth's forces. Perhaps the source of our destructiveness is just that simple.

I think of the terrible gales of August 1635 which altered life from Plymouth to the Cape; the hurricane floods everywhere eating the exposed shore; of the earthquake of June 1638, of a violent nor'easter Christmas eve during the Revolution, "unparalleled in the annals of New England." Of the tidal wave which broke Monomoy, after the wars with Canada, and before the Revolt. Of the 1815 September hurricane whose tides could have "swept over the Cape" had it been 15 inches higher. I think of gales in 1858 which "swept away all loose material." and of those in the 1800s or more recently which changed the sands and broke the island.

I picture the storm of 1841 which lost so many men on the George's Banks. I think of those storms in the 1800s, or more recently, which changed the sands and broke the island.

And always the weather commanded:

1872: "Our weir fishermen have been forced to delay their preparatory operations by the severity of the weather." *("The weather conditions have suited gunners this week, the heavy winds during the night serving to hold the birds here in their flight, and the moderate days have allowed the sportsmen to go at will to the most remote places.")*

June 20th, 1872- "There was picked up by Charles Clinton of Chatham on the Stone Horse, a quarter board of a vessel bearing the name of Charles F. Mayo, supposed to have been lost during the heavy storm of the 6th. Also a quantity of laths, pickets &c, were picked up."

1888: "Heavy seas during the great storm made new inroads in the beach way down in the regions of Uncle Saul's Drain. It looks as if the great beach will be all to pieces before long."

Jan. 31, 1898, the Portland Gale washed up bodies on Monomoy's shores and destroyed lighthouses and wharves.

1904: "Half-way house on Mon. Station washed away in a big sea."

Low tides pull up clams. High tides sweep shorebirds to the highest

knolls. Storms gobble down and cough up ships. In 1907, a terrible storm tide rose to the "highest notch" and "the tide on Monomoy carried away several shanties." In spring of 1932, the town of Chatham had "rip-rapped the banks to save lighthouses." 1933 saw a gale cut through Shooter's Island. A hurricane of September 21,1938 breaches Morris Island. September 1950, a hurricane swings. August and a month later in 1954, Carol, then Edna perform classic bitchery on the coastline; the ghastly blasts happening when a repressed and false placidity meets a column of heated air prepares Monomoy for its coming fission/division. A blizzard reported by Sherman of the Standard Times, 1/8/67 left the area's waters in shelves of jumbled ice. Headlines: "High Tides, Wind, Virtually Isolates Monomoy" with photo of an old Ford drowning.

Back on the Sea
Roll Back

If the land is uncertain, so too are the seas. If on the land, out of the sun can avalanche and roll shadow which can blow your body back to a resting position against the wind itself, on the waters the terrible, irritable winds, without warning, can whisk the seas into an uncontrollable souffle of foam. After it has been unseasonably warm, the clash of the rising heat with the chill descending gloomy air of cumulus clouds can blast together like lovers who hate each other but are attracted. The skein of airs over the inlets, balls and shreds, like ink spills scratching out a warning from a captive over a stained page of a sky. Sea ducks scatter; the light changes over the South Beach's scraggles of tanned sands.

Over Monomoy, cold becomes a thick fat body, and anger devolves out of the conflicted sky to proclaim in its rage its final say over the land, lest the land lose its modesty, become arrogant, think it has control over the seas.

Seas can stake out house-sized waves in a gale green glow, of a sudden, without forecasting. A boat can be picked up and let to slide down "boxcars," waves which rise higher than two men. These crack open at the top with a membranous veiny substance, like a tremendous yoke of slush white being broken, turn bottle green, to plunge the vessel, lunging, back down towards a bottomless wetness. I was on a schooner on a day like that once. I rode it like a bucking horse while everybody else turned sea-color and puked. The danger delighted me, made me giddy with a bizarre laughter. Maybe it is the male side of me; the part which delights in adventure and risk, the part allied with the 1700s and 1800s, which identifies with fishermen, farmers, sea captains, with hunters in breechclouts, far more than with my own times, far more than with academics or artists.

Seas can dash out the light, as they can take a life. Currents can tear

apart the jauntiest boat, the bravest of strong men.

I think of Nickerson's relation of Monomoy lifestation Captain Joseph Kelley's advice in the 1900s: "If the sea mounds up and doesn't break, don't worry. If the sea starts to curl, stay clear if you can."

Congresses, constellations of floppy wet snows slaking themselves in the white fright of seas, or lightning clearing the long roads of the skies with its energies, shaking out the punctured airs with explosions, can make a 50-foot schooner, sharply fit, shapely, roll underneath these storeys of downpress. Wadded under the cloaks and bandages of fog, detached totally from the land or sky, like a planet off course from the moon, the ship slips off into the blackgreeness of another universe.

Lightships

What must it be like rocking back and forth in a lightship? Lonely, eating, "scouse" salt beef with potatoes and onions, fried with trimmings and "duff," a kind of Yorkshire pudding with raisins or dried apples in it.

"She washes her own decks," it was said of these boats. Described as prisons, plenty of leave time, one day for every three on board, was given from the ten months of imprisoned duty, and pay was high. The inside of the dining parlor, with its curly white molding, Victorian lamps, often was a room in which men used to disengage themselves from boredom with games, especially gambling. Ironic, because there was no place aboard to spend your money. Taking this duty was considered a good way to get yourself out of debt. (Perhaps the prudish look of the ship interior was to counteract the bad rep of life aboard a lightship.) Not soothed by the cloudily benign, gently honeysuckled, aromatically drying breezes of the shore, even old salts became seasick in iron-hard storms in lightships at anchor.

What is it like going down in a bashed schooner, waiting for men to row out in fifty-foot seas from Monomoy in a lifesaving dinghy, while a lightship sounded off her alarms?

To aid in navigating the area, the lightships continued their vigils well after the Village closed. As the Branters came and went, as Middletown bustled and fished, the lightships listened for distress signals, watched for flags and flares. In 1872 the Chatham Monitor reports: "The Shovelful Light Ship has been newly painted. She is commanded by Asa Jones, a smart energetic Captain hailing from Cape Cod." This Asa Jones was the same reported by the paper's "Beach Comber" to have had a wonderful garden on "desolate" Monomoy, made from loam brought over in bags during the time he kept the Monomoy lighthouse, from 1875-86.

The Pollock Rip ship had put up with its terrible light until 1876 when she

was equipped with a brand new fixed white light, carrying eight burners with their reflectors, in total. At the same time, a new steam-driven fog whistle, as well as a handbell were added to her. Other fog horns would be added to the former sounds of lighters of their guns and bells. The horns ran on steam and were still in use until 1889, when a new kind of cylinder head was installed.

The Pollock's equipment would follow into a new ship placed on the rip in 1877, built at a cost of $50,000, 120 feet long, 27 feet broad, weighing 410 tons. She would be run at a cost of $5,000 a year. She would be painted red with a white stripe, as she had been since the 1860s. Each of her masts was supplied with a lightning apparatus. She tended to drag her anchors so she was "fit with heavy moorings like a frigate."

In 1866 the Cross Rip ship was in place, now nearer to Nantucket than to the Moy, a "straw-colored vessel with a red streak;" sloop-rigged, near a red buoy. Cross Rip disappeared the year after and was replaced with a new vessel. In 1876 she was dry-docked, returned to her place repaired at a cost of $1000. In the 1880s, ships of white oak were replaced with those built of metal, which had been experimental since 1847. Cross Rip's metal work, damaged by collision, was repaired in 1885. Bodywork repairs on these ships were frequent. The Handkerchief vessel with its fixed white light, because of the roughness of the waters, would be so damaged as to need an overhaul in 1866 and 1878.

Steam tenders to service ships, lighthouses, and buoys, were chugging since 1870, 22 of them built between then and 1889 for the service as a whole, replacing the former fast-sailing Revenue cutters with their multiple headsails and wide beams, for this kind of tending.

Lightships themselves, first of wood and under sail, with auxiliary steam, changed to metal with new improved single cylinder steam engines by 1891.

In 1889 lightships were depicted by Johnson in "Modern Lighthouse Service" as having Argand lamps inside large panes of glass. (I can imagine those corrugated panes glistening.) Argand was a Swiss inventor who created a cylinder with a two-way air flow which helped keep the oil or gas burning. (His method was used in some lighthouse lamps, too, replacing Fresnel's.)

In 1892, buoys near the lighters and their rips were painted red for starboard, black for port. By the 1900s, whistling buoys would mark the rips.

Broken Moorings

In the eighteen hundreds, tides sometimes were so swift, even as they still and likely eternally, can be, that the lightships would break from their

moorings. In 1866, on Christmas, the Cross Rip broke anchor. The men of her crew were not found. Relatives, mostly on Nantucket, mourned in a service given on Feb. 2, 1867. Shortly afterwards a telegram came in from New Orleans that the men were all right and in the south. (Having so much fun, they hadn't written sooner?) 1918 produced a dramatically icy winter in which the Cross Rip and her crew disappeared entirely. This was a war year, and one wonders. Cross Rip was replaced.

The Stonehorse, too, had to be secured more tightly after an especially anchor-loosening winter. In her early years the Pollock Rip ship broke her moorings so often as to be nicknamed the "Happy Wanderer." She seemed to like to slip adrift over ice. In March of 1872, for instance, the light ship was carried off by ice to Great Round Shoal many miles southeast of her place, returned by the tender Verbena with great difficulty. In April of 1886 "she broke adrift in a severe gale...and...was blown about 60 miles to sea." Joseph Hardy, Keeper of the Chatham Light, reported many breaks in the latter two decades of the 1800s with comments such as: "Adrift up the Sound in the worst gale of the season." During the 1898 Portland Gale, the Pollock ship trucked right on over to the Stonehorse, staying adrift, until she was towed back on Dec. 13. In 1874/5 the Lighthouse Board report speaks of a winter unequaled for bad weather and ice since 1857. All the lightships broke their moorings and were swept away down the floe. (Oddly enough this is very near the time the Arctic whaling fleet was lost in the north.)

Ships were rammed by other ships. In 1858 the Handkerchief was "rammed seven times because of fog." Even though it had light and fog signals, the Pollock was often hit in fog so thick that in Chatham a man "once shingled the roof of his house 200 feet out into space."

The Cross Rip was hit over four times in six weeks in 1904 alone.

Schooners and sailing ships often ran into the light ships, damaging them. The Stonehorse in December of 1899 had her port bow broken, her men knocked over, and all her lights put out. A typical report.

Adamson in Keepers of the Lights, reports that between 1863 and 1890, 43 ships were stranded just near the Cross Rip, heading towards or past Monomoy on the inner channel between the islands. In many years such as 1883, an average of 20,000 vessels were reported passing her. Despite disasters, many ships got by. However, there was at least a wreck a year off these ships, not just groundings but sinkings. Sleepy seas could upset, rise to clear out everything in their way. *(Out in the March distance, out of my long windows, I see the freshets of air, the fresh recipe of spring, its gala tonic, change into a bitter witch's brew. It is exciting for me, but beyond where ships stage, the terror is not a play; it is real.)*

From Flint:

"HISTORICAL NOTES: LV 3

-1852 Placed on Shovelful Shoal (MA)

-1872 Mar 7, carried off station by moving ice, replaced Mar 12

-1875 Feb 14, carried off station by ice, dragged over shoal damaging sheathing

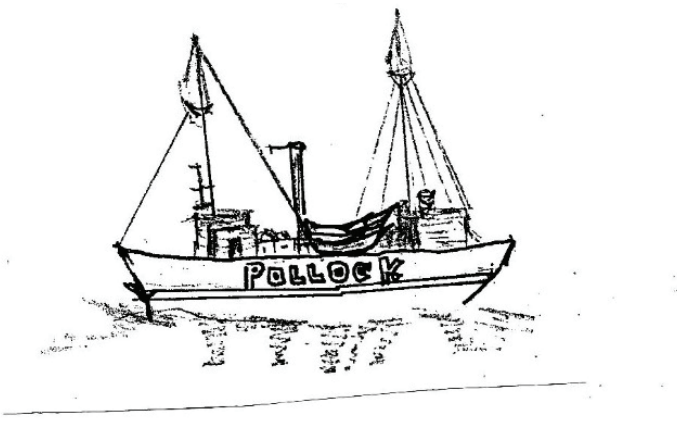
-1879 Mar 31, broke adrift in storm, returned to station Apr 5

-1899 Feb 13, Dragged eastward by ice, returned to station Apr 15

- Passing vessels collided with Shovelful lightship in 1884; 1889 Mar 27 0430; 1892 Aug; 1893 Feb 23; 1896; 1898; 1899 Mar 22; 1900 Aug 28 & Oct 21; 1901 May 15 0400; 1902 Aug 10; 1904 Jan 8; 1905 Mar 7; 1906 Oct 8. Except for 4 instances of coal barges under tow, all collisions involved sailing vessels."

Through the twistings of the sea on March 28, 1923, a vessel with 4000 pounds of coal sank near the Stonehorse lightship. Next March, the Wyoming, one of the newest coal steamers, went down off the Pollock Rip ship, also bearing coal. This coal, along with other of her parts, washed up on shore for years and was found decorating the Monomoy lightkeeper's rooms. The year of the Wyoming wreck (1924) the Pollock ship, like a bucking horse tethered to one spot, tossed so badly at anchor she had to use her engines to keep from dashing to pieces. Although not actively engaged in rescue, according to Century Magazine, light ships had been known to send off flares, lower dories to aid the wrecked in emergencies. Notations often mention things such as, "Crew of wrecked ship boarded by the Shovelful Lightship," September 9, 1893. That same year the Middle Station was phoned from the Point Rip phone house to say that the crew of an abandoned ship was found on the Pollock Rip vessel. Bernie Webber remembers once when the Pollock lightship "was pitching and rolling in the blackness of breaking seas, snow and sleet of this early spring northeast gale. As the sea broke over the bows, the ship jerked each time and came up taut on her anchor chain. Men struggled in the sea spray mixed with snow and sleet on the dimly-lit ice-ridden deck. One man nearly washed over the side, to be caught by a fellow seaman." They let their hawser down for a flailing Novi, a little wooden fishing boat. The Coast Guard did not reach her in time. Even with radio and new technology, the elements could win.

Lightships, regrettably, were taken out of service when radar and other mechanization took over the Coast Guard. Pollock Rip, one of the last to go, was replaced by a buoy in 1969.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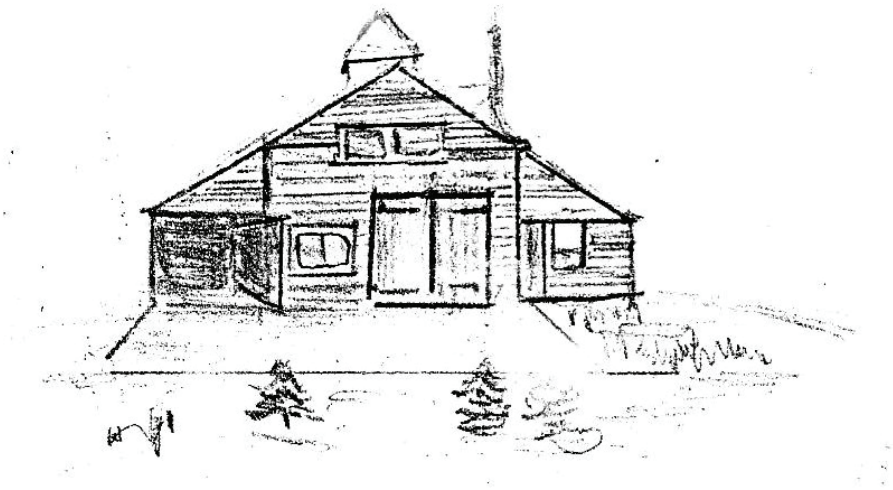

30

New Life in the Saving Service of Monomoy

On Monomoy, when everything else was deserted because of its seasonality – no Brant shooters, no Middletown resorters – the Middle Station nearer the northwest, the Lighthouse tower nearer the southeast, together watched the waters; coming active when hurricanes and blizzards spat. In the 1870s, though the land may have ruled America, the sea continued as the engine of destiny around Monomoy.

After the Civil War, in 1869, Congress was going to allocate funds to the Revenue Cutter Service's lifesaving branch but did not. In a welter of bureaucratic confusion Life Saving Service had jurisdiction over Humane Society equipment. (The Highland Light keeper for instance had to OK the use of Humane Hut boats and rockets in a rescue.) In 1872, as we descended upon the original owners of the west in a campaign of extreme oppression against them, expanded our agricultural and industrial bases, began to reenter the globe in search of raw materials which our increasing appetites wanted even as we had begun to consume some of them on the

western body of the nation, the sea still controlled vessels. Shipping was the vital link along with the railroads along which the wonder of our inventive expansion or the disease or thrill of our nationalized commercialism (depending upon your point of view) travelled.

As shipping became, by the 1870s, again of increasing importance, so did the salvaging of wrecks. To put it another way, as the sea commanded the economy with its romance of sail adapted to profit, the interests of egalitarian owner-captains around the Cape, or those of onshore Boston men who capitalized ships, urban men who had perhaps never been to sea, who sweated inside their land-fat with dreams of aggrandizement's glory, became paramount to protect.

Both entities demanded for fishermen's and other mariners' lives further safety. After the Civil War there was a change of conscience. As Mark Antony De Wolf Howe in *The Humane Society of the Commonwealth Massachusetts* writes in 1918, after the Civil War a "new sense of liberty closely was associated with it (the Society) a new sense of the value of individual lives." In practice, often private interest had superseded personal good or public conscience, manifesting itself as negligence or expedience for the sake of profit. While fishermen and mariners fumed at life loss, they had little recourse other than to start bethels for themselves. Sailors were expendable. It seemed the merchants did not put political pressure on government for increases in lifesaving expenditures, perhaps satisfied if wreckers returned their goods. For lives were only part of the motivation for new protection. Mercantile vessels and their objects alike were worth small fortunes. It took more money to build, man, stock them than ever before. Marine insurance was more and more costly. Inevitably still more cost-effective protection for mercantile shipping would be needed by anxious top-hatted entrepreneurs of Boston, San Francisco, Essex. The refurbishment of lighthouses and lifestations became a priority as a series of terrible wrecks in the early 1870s compelled Congress to allocate $200,000 to the safety of shipping. As the profits of dealing via the sea roads became more enticing than the plunder of pirates and wrecks, property saving, rather than property plundering, became profit-worthy.

In 1872, the Life Saving Service, still loosely tied with the local Humane Society under its jurisdiction, became officially the United States Life Saving Service, under Sumner Increase Kimball's dynamic new leadership. The Society awarded medals and still, in a few cases, directed lifestations. As before, the USLSS was affiliated with the national Revenue Cutter Service (renamed in 1894 from its post-Revolutionary War title of Revenue Marine Service) which had been around to function as a coast guard since the beginning. The USLSS vowed to clean up the deplorable condition of the

waystations as well as the political nepotism in the service. Kimball would make changes to satisfy both mariners and merchants. The lifehut gave way to something beyond mere shelter for those beset by the vagaries of a famous set of horrible waters: new lifestations. In the 1870s, the glare of the lighthouse bubbling through the watery dark often meant an accompanying intensified service with protection not only for lives taken up and down in their dark vessels, but for goods, would be available nearby.

Sea roads would at least be scrutinized by the new sea sheriffs.

In 1864 the Monomoy lifestation crew was paid $52 a year. Awards were given out to men such as Joseph Hardy of $50, to various Eldredges (i and e), Princes and Deans $10, and so on. Later crews would be paid $45 to $60 a month; the Keeper $800 to $900 a year. In 1869, Josiah Hardy was listed as being keeper for Monomoy's Humane Society's Life Saving Service, with a lifeboat, a mortar station, and a hut of refuge. (Had he been the continuous and exemplary conscientious keeper since 1855?) Monomoy, in Kimball's time and beyond, became known as District Two for lighthouses, lifestations, lightships. On Monomoy in 1872, "various government buildings" had washed into the sea. Most likely old lifestations such as the one at Inward which was lost in the 1940s. These were low-gabled shanties, with enough bunks for beds, a small space for the heat and cook stove exhaling out of a pert single chimney. They had an attached or nearby boat house with a hinged door.

In 1872 only nine lifestations manned the whole southern New England coast. In 1872/3, the USLSS built a rescue station at what was then almost halfway down our isle, 1/2 mile from Inward Point near the old humane hut "wigwam," situated near the west side. It was reported by Dalton as 2 1/2 miles north of the lighthouse and by Yankee magazine as four miles north of the southernmost terminus. After the break of 1870/2, erosion and lengthening so changed the sands of the place that by 1884 a U.S.L.S.S. report said Middle Station (Monomoy Station) was only two miles north of the light.

Wherever its exact locale, it was one of original nine "red houses," whose bright roofs would be visible to vessels commissioned for the Cape Cod area alone. Soon there would be 10, and by the early 1900s stations were consolidated and built, such as Old Harbor and Peaked Hill Bars to make 14 life houses; by 1928, 12 were kept. The station at Inward which needed drastic improvements to its plant (even if its men were far more conscientious than elsewhere) appears to have become part of a set of outbuildings of the new Middle or Monomoy Station.

George Baxter was that station's first keeper, hosting it during the height of Middletown, until 1882, to be followed by a Captain Tuttle. The

outpost, which Brant shooters and Middletown vacationers would use as a landmark, was always manned. It was the one some 80-year-olds who had camps on Monomoy remember as the funky life house, the active station near Inward. (The later Monomoy Point station is somehow recalled as more formal, more distant.) It is said that the stove at Middle Station never went out, *a warmin' thought on a damp, foggy, stormy evening, when it seemed the scooped foamy grey seas might rise to o'erflood the narrow strip behind which the broad gabled big roofed structure was tucked, even as the wet sky stooped down upon it.*

The new life houses were unique architecturally: like big barns with big double doors which at first opened out, and later slid from side to side, out of which the boats came down a ramp. They had a roomy triangular look, and a steeply pitched, very large and wide roof. The lookout turret was reached by a ladder. Ceilings inside were low. The keeper's room, kitchen, mess and sitting room were on the ground floor along with the boat room and the apparatus room. Two dorms above were one for the crew, another for the wrecked and for storage. (Floor space was variously described as 16' by 37', 18' by 42'.)

The Panic of 1873 delayed funding of more improvements for United States Lifesaving Services, just as it was getting under way, (just as it delayed construction of the Northern Pacific in the west). But by 1879, when the financial ups and downs of the past years were ending, funding could be appropriated from Congress again for USLSS improvements.

In1886 the Inward station burned down and was rebuilt closer to its original locus.

In 1896, Chatham Historical Society diaries note that, "Attempt to get a life station erected at Monomoy extreme, and is in progress." Keeper Tuttle of Inward Station felt it was so important to get a station at the tip that he suggested his own station be moved towards the lighthouse. He died in July of 1899, and it was not until a bad wreck, that of the Wadena in 1902, was the urgency realized. (More on this later.)

As high as the light from a moon caught in water is long, is your shadow near the halfway house; it, so quaintly cozy, with everything from biscuits to matches and bibles. Maybe someone keeps love letters in a red cedar box amongst the beach pebbles, amid sea foibles, under their pillow at the station.

Wrecks and Rescues

After the Village, as before, wreckers and surfmen (lifesavers) could be one and the same. Until the USLSS came into being, in some places, Humane Society volunteers who had doubled had "pitched battles" with

the paid savers to see who get out there first. In 1873, laws would prevent the doubling practice.

It is hot with that annoying late summer heat, a September heat when you expect coolth. It hangs in corn-colored chunks in the back dunes of the south. But it only stays for a minute. The fog comforts the sandy isle in dampness. In the distance the saffron beach heather stain of the lantern light in the lightkeeper's cottage windows presents an intimacy, spills into the hollows around it, collects time and space, like a shawl, back to itself. The warm coziness of a candle in a room is invaded by offshore wetness. Off the island, rushing out of boat houses, into the wandering willful waves, lifemen. The Halloween painted sky opens like a jack-o-lantern, devours the thin wafer of the lands; the stuffed-with-hisses seas beyond, tip up tattered boats.

Lighthouses flare, keepers watch now as few or no townsmen gather, unlike a decade ago. From the arctic north of the isle from the belly, men plunge their surfboat into a bad sea. (In the age of sail, cut off from the land, if there was a "wrack," you wanted to go out into the hard, cold slap of weather to save men or to raid for the remnants when other people would want to listen to the wind and tuck themselves into bed. This island could feel like a ship, protected and dry, or about to be cast away.)

In April of 1872, the ship US Grant takes on water at Monomoy beach, is refloated by the brand new USLSS crew. In years to follow soon after, out of Monomoy station, the schooner Elwood Burton of New York, stranded on Handkerchief's shoals, was rescued by six men. Dalton in the classic Lifesavers of Cape Cod, reports five men were taken, wet and scared, off the barge Paxinos, after striking shoals of Pollock Rip. The barge was refloated by the lifesavers. Ledger after ledger is filled. According to the "Exact Copies of the Wreck Reports of the Life Saving Station at Monomoy," surf-men attended hundreds of wrecks of sailing ships from schooner to barque to barge – engaged in fishing, carrying passengers, carrying cargoes, between 1883 and 1894 alone. From the Monomoy Wreck reports came typical accounts: April 6, 1893, "We boarded the vessel at 8:30 in a thick snowstorm. Found her leaking badly with 6 feet of water in her hold. The vessel labored heavily...and probably wrung her keel." Telegraphing a message to the Boston salvage ship to save her, it arrived with machinery that had not been used in a while and as the weather changed again to ferocious, failed to aid the schooner which soon went down. The crew and its baggage were saved.

Usually rescues were more mundane, but nonetheless heroic. From the Monomoy Wreck Reports:

"October 20,1886. Hattie B. Kelsey Schooner, 412 tons. New York, American. 12 Years Old. Coal. Vessel worth 16,000; Coal 3,000. Mistook

Monomoy Light for "Shoveful" Shoal:

Vessel was seen at daylight lying at anchor about one mile West fromm the "Pollock Rip Light Ship," with her jibboom gone. She had her mainsail and foresail set and was apparently trying to heave up the anchor but as the tide was running to windward they were obliged to lower the sails to get the anchor. The wind in the meantime was increasing in force, and, (as we afterward learned) they decided to reef the sails before getting under way. By the time they got reefed, the wind had increased to a gale and the sea rough in proportion and with their small crew it was thought impossible to get the anchor. They therefore set the signal of distress, expecting help to come from that Life-Saving Station, although the Captain said that he did not think a boat could be pulled to windward.

We were keeping a constant watch upon the vessel as we thought it probable that he would call for assistance. Judging from his maneuvers, and as soon as the flag was set we started. The wind blowing fresh at the time and after we started it increased in force to a gale. The weather was also quite cold and every drop of water that struck the boat was immediately turned to ice. We could see that the ensign was set Union down and we were very anxious to go to her if it was possible to get back as the vessel might possibly get back in under the land as the tide would be in favor for about two hours. On our arrival the Captain told us that his vessel was very deeply loaded with stone, a part of which was on deck and if he lay there she would be very likely to ice up and sink before another morning and that he must either leave her there and go ashore with us or try to get under way and go in under lee of the beach in smooth water.

The vessel having lost her jibboom and consequently most of her head sail the Captain was not certain that she would work. He said that if he could get out of his present position even if it were to run the vessel on the beach he would be willing to do it as she would certainly sink if she lay there through another night of freezing weather.

We told him that the vessel would work we would pilot him in out of the way of the ice and in smooth water.

He decided to get under way and we all took hold and in a few minutes had sail on her and the anchor up.

We had about three miles to go directly to windward but as the current was in our favor we made quite good progress and anchored near Monomoy Light about 11:30 A.M.

The Captain was greatly pleased to get in out of his perilous position and seemed to fully appreciate our help and risk we run in going four miles directly away from the land to leeward in a freezing Northwest gale in midwinter."

Rescue

S.I. Kimball's report on life saving methods in the 1870s recommended that each patrolman be equipped with a beach lantern and several red hand lights. As surfmen watched from towers, logging every boat, patrols in black oilcloths walked the beach in all weather. Watches were for four hours; men needed to be on call all the time. Two men patrolled, one to the right, one to the left. If they discovered a wreck, they would ignite one by percussion (that is, by striking its cap so as to set off the powdery red flare). "The Coston signal was carried by all beach Patrols. Cartridges fitted to holder with a plunder allowed them to be fires, they burnt a red signal which meant to all ships they were running into danger, were too close to the beach and should change their course as soon as possible."

Men exchanged information, clocked in, passed a badge to each new watch to prove they had done their duty; warm up. The patrol out of Middle Station was to the halfway house not that far away at Inward, where official badges would be exchanged and a snack eaten, and 2 1/2 miles north to Chatham. Halfway houses were a bit like Humane huts at their best, and some were made of the old refuges themselves. They were fairly high gabled cabins with a single door, a chimney from a small stove. The huts contained hard tack, soda biscuits, a kerosene lantern, jugs of water stashed in the sand to avoid winter frost and summer heat, and dry fuel wood. (Later, when in 1902 the Point station was added, the Middle patrol would go 2 1/2 miles to there. The Point patrol would go 1 1/2 miles south.)

The job of rescue itself would be difficult. Going out to huge muscular giants of seas, throwing ropes out to the drowning from small boats, not easy, even later, when motorized boats and sophisticated equipment were available. An effort was organized according to circumstance.

"You have to go, but you don't have to return," was a grim motto of the lifesaving service. (Pirates had said something quite similar, "Growl you may, but go you must.")

(Extrapolated from Giambara, Dalton and Lombard): Offshore, you are a ship trying to make it through past the washboard chop of Pollock Rip. You mistake the red lantern lights of a schooner for those of the lightship, somehow. You fear this slender strip of land and its shoals, for its waters, for its human reputation for mooncusssers. You are off course by a few degrees in a visibility of near zero with fog around you, wind flogging your sheets, and rain making your hands slip. It smells green, slimy, salty, warm. But you are cold. There is an excitement of being, transmitted into motion which dives and rides high, tips and falls into a world which is limitless like the backstage of the sky itself.

Onshore, it is a nasty green-grey day. The sea begins to heave swells; the 60-foot flag-pole near the station puts out a triangular warning flag along its cross bar. A ship comes dangerously near a shoal; you shoot out a Coston flare, holding your kerosene lantern in the other hand, dressed in oilskins head to toe, boots, big fireman-like rain hat turned down in the back to protect your neck, long in the front to protect your face.

The ship places distress signals on its masts. You signal the station keeper on lookout in the tower. He assembles the men. They wear their waders over their oilskins. The doors of the station open; the surfboat to be slid down the ramp. Seas are too high now, wind running too swift. Men harness themselves to a cart, pull out a spool with a rope, attach it to the Lyle-gun, shoot grappling hooks to the vessel in distress. Offshore, the crew has climbed the riggings and is clinging to the rat-lines; swaying, wondering if the ship will break apart. (Wondering why they ever went to sea.)

Shoot out a complex devise, like a ski lift, lined with a set of pant-like tops attached to a round hoop. Some of the wrecked men get in and are hoisted to shore one by one. The seas are beginning to calm. You and the other men pull out; locking the oars in; the keeper manning the center pole. The "winter man" stays ashore. The surf boat is light, under 1100 lbs., perhaps as light as 700 lbs. It is a new Monomoy version of a self-bailing, tinned, Race Point Beebee McClellan, stripped down, barely bothering with cork and air bumpers, light and extremely maneuverable. With six oarlocks for your special crew. It is a special Monomoy boat, readapted by the crews to fit these waters.

The deftness of your crew is legendary. This time you can place five survivors in the boat; a member of your crew stays with the wrecked.

Numb, cold, dazed, in shock, the rescued are brought into the station, warmed by the fire, wrapped in blankets. They are given hot coffee and new dry clothes supplies from the Women's National Relief Association. Out of a big medicine chest, first aid is supplied. You try to cheer up the group, saying their property will be saved.

One man is resuscitated by blowing opium and tobacco into his lungs.

Upstairs, the survivors sleep in the spare room on cots.

A Life?

"These men from childhood have been viewing the sea in all its moods." They are used to it. Thus, when not actively engaged in rescue, "Life is monotonous," it is said of the life service. Home lives? S.I. Kimball himself, in an 1881 report, long after he had resigned as head of the service, spoke of how grueling, how sleepless, eight months of the year are for seven men, and requests that an extra man be put on so that crews can have a day off a

week. This happened: Reports of a keeper returning from the mainland at sunset one May in 1894, seeing a wreck off the tip near Point Rip, mention that no surfmen were at liberty. Other reports mention temporary men on in place of absent crew, confirming evidence of flexibility in leave time. With summer off, and one day a week from sunrise to sunset leave, men seemed to manage to have a family life. Newspaper clipping in a Wreck Report of 1893, Oct. 27: Monomoy Middle Station Captain Tuttle's wife and children have gone to Maine to visit relatives while the new house is completed on Doane Street. Dalton speaks of marriages with offspring, of occasional divorces.

John Henry Merryman, a part of the service in the 1880s, writes in *United States Life-Saving Service, 1880*, "There was a library of well-selected donated books. The men would gather in the messroom (lithos in his pamphlet show the flag mast and gale flags outside in grim weather, blowing), when the wind offshore gave little occasion for anxiety... rehearse legends of the coast, spin yarn, sing, listen to violin or flute." Sometimes surprise parties of friends and family, would bring cakes, pastries, good things from home (even as Coast Guard kin do now. The cookware in a guard mess is absolutely the best). "Then all is joy unconfined. The boat room is cleared of carriage and cart. The merry dance goes round." But the patrol was not relaxed. "Indeed, who knows that the beach watch is not then doubled and that, with wife or sweetheart to share his vigils, the patrolman yearns not for the pleasures of the station?" as Joseph Warren Smith wrote in *Gleanings from the Sea*.

Drills, maintenance watches. Night and day. Monday and Thursday boat drill. Tuesday and Friday, breech's buoy drill - attached to a cross of a tree in front of the station. Wednesday, barracks and sleeping quarters clean up. Sunday, religion. These men, who loved strong coffee and talk, were supposed to have been quite devout. Sand here could carry at 100 miles per hour in a hurricane, 70 in a gale. Living neither on the seas, nor completely on the shores – but a creature of the edge, looking to the storms from a not quite immoveable sandy berth. *Not quite of the sea, not quite of land, but something of shore; not robin nor shearwater, but tern. Something not of the space of seas, nor the houseldness of farmers, nor the constraints of fishers, nor of the seasonal rush of hunters, no dew on the branch; no duck's semi-safety – more of a thankful lantern in an unmoving hut after the danger of the motion of the seas, yet competent as a tern in those seas.*

Salvage

Tricks of fog and light fool sailors, deceive them into misjudging distances. The storms of the Cape thrust out of their labor of creaking,

popping, shattered vessels, a clan of dead bodies. The smart sea breezes could freshen a sail or kill. That storm on the George's Bank of 1841 took over 70 lives of men under 30. Although most gales did not tipple up life that gluttonously, many a man or woman did not like the sound of the surf grating and sawing at the sand's edge, nor admire the poetic beauty of the ocean's moods, because, as Thoreau said, "It is the scene where his nearest relatives were wrecked."

Revenue cutters whose jaunty, spicy-looking ships which had prowled against pirates, had collected tardy tariffs after the Revolution, and had scoured for slavers in the 1840s were the last to hunt out derelict vessels to destroy or tow them if professional private salvagers found a boat intractable. Cutters could also aid distressed vessels. (They stayed under sail until well after the 1870s, because trial engines proved too slow and faulty). Typical is a report of the cutter Acushnet in 1914: attempting to tow the floundering John Paul Jones off Cross Rip, the seas were so terrible the cutter vessel had to cut loose. (Sinking, the men were saved by the crew of the Cross Rip lightship, taken to hospital by her tender.) But government cutters were by law not allowed to actually salvage ships.

In the 1880s, salvagers are increasingly mentioned, as they had been during the days of the village, as being from Monomoy rather than from the mainland of Chatham. "It seems to be their policy to reach a vessel as soon as possible to make a bargain with them," Station Chief Eldredge complained in 1899. A foundering ship is spotted by Monomoy Point fishermen and wreckers who assist the Lifesavers in the rescue. Disassemblers handle the saving of property for a fee contracted upon at Monomoy District Number Two on September of 1883, as well as on November 17, 1887, and many other times. Licensed wreckers were always out in bad weather, watching, sometimes spotting trouble before the surf patrols did. During the summer, wreckers were often unofficial lifemen. Legitimate lifesaving men, on behalf of ship owners, would contract with salvagers like Elmer Mayo for a fee which insurance or owners would pay. Occasionally it would be paid out a commission on the retrieved goods. Sometimes on the spot deals between captains of a sinking vessel and salvagers were negotiated.

The idea was to refloat the vessel by tugging her or keeping a tight tow line on her until the tide rose to mitigate the suction on her. Sometimes damage needed to be repaired on the spot. If the ship was coming apart, cargo needed to be taken out. If she was going to sink, then she needed to be dismantled and her parts saved for reassembly. As Ballou wrote, "Then comes some heavy steam tug, around from Boston, and hitches to the cast-away a quarter of a mile or more of huge hawsers, and puffs, and strains, and snorts, from sunrise to sunset, till maybe the beached ship is lifted

and handed bodily out of the deep hollow which its rolling struggle had churned in the sands."

Local wreckers like Mayo would dory out to a vessel, fix her enough to refloat her, transport her goods by flat boat or barge to shore where horse and cart would take the stuff first by marine rail, then by freight car, often to off-Cape owners. Or, after the private off-Cape dismantlers had done their work, "beachcombers" would transport the saved goods by horse and barge or rail to the ship owners. Insurance underwriters would assess the damage and the payout.

Sail and Steam (A Drift Off)

For many, other than fishermen in this time, the age of the sea is another world. Looking at the land from the private enclosure and enforced sociability of the sea, you are on a moving island; smaller, half a room of a moving house; compact and vulnerable with an illusion of safety. The importance of winds, of being owned by them, being in them, is seldom remembered now as it was then. The sea is a different dimension, one we have lost. As T.H. Hall says in 1925, "Invention has, by cable and radio, not only shrunken the size of the ocean, it has shrunken the importance of the ship-captain."

I dream about being closed inside the vessel during the heaving of a storm. The kind of peace only chaos can create; the same excitement which centers a person to a calm that I might have if I were to ride a white horse past vaporous plains to a buff spiral of a mountain face...beyond my enemies as a Sioux in the west. Centered in chaos, the outside world sealed off by space and vapor. Flying above it...

I remember that the height of human population on Monomoy corresponded to the Age of Sail; a time when motion was translated into action, not by the passive carrying of motor and wheels of rails or cars, nor even those of horse and coach, but canvas and the actions of the human body.

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Post-Village Lighthouse

The Lighthouse Service remained separately under the supervision of the Lighthouse Board's division of the Treasury until the 1930s when it was placed under the Coast Guard's jurisdiction. This department of the bureaucracy revamped some of the lighthouses around the Cape slightly before the new series of Red House life stations were built.

In 1870 the Monomoy lighthouse was given a covered way from the tower to a remodeled 1 1/2 story white house designed as a combination of late Greek Revival, early Victorian architecture, complete with inserts of fashionable new dormers. The inside of shiplap was most likely whitewashed, to keep away depression, a job risk. Many windows would let in light to illumine and cheer. The interior was likely simply furnished.

Near the site of the old George and Ann mishap, the tower was recast, again with cast iron over brick, this time most likely with a lighter Bessemer-related alloy. It was red with a black lantern, 47 feet above the ocean's threats, still southeast of the Powder Hole; before the recurving of sands at the foot of the place made it appear to have moved westward to its current position. Its fixed white beam was visible for 12 miles out to sea. Mariners were supposed to be able to sort out lights by their relative positions; how they were juxtaposed with others in the vistas of distant land, like far stars siting your way on the liquid inky night of the sea. The number of beacon towers at a site, such as the twins at Chatham for a while, along with a further addition of a code provided for the captain on board his ship which was supplied by marine observer handbooks or by various coastal pilots or by the Lighthouse Board reports themselves, as to what lights were flashing or still, red or white, gave further ease in identifying location. In 1871 it was requested that the light be upgraded to a second order fixed light, but it appears that it remained as it had been. Many lights refurbished in the 1870s were given revolving mechanisms invented by Fresnel. A carriage rotated which was propelled by winding, a by-hand procedure attended to by the lightkeepers. This let the light flash, a bit like later early motion picture mechanisms. The fourth order light of Monomoy Lighthouse was

never changed to a flashing one, though plans to do so had been proposed and reported in various Lighthouse Board bulletins.

In 1877 the Monomoy light continues to be listed as white and fixed. It stayed that way through the 1880s, visible for 12 miles to sea from its then 30-foot-high turret, which sands rising had diminished in height.

In 1883 the Lighthouse Bureau report states that a new shed with a rebuilt covered way and two new rooms with a workroom which had a bench for the lamps, as well as a summer kitchen, had been added to the keeper's house. All the boat ways were repaired. This probably meant the ramps, slide areas or moorings for dories which functioned as transport and carriers of supplies for the place. The lighthouse may have still functioned for the Humane Society apparently, as an adjunct to the life-saving station, too, with a surf boat on hand for emergencies.

In 1892 an "improved" fixed light was put in; what the improvement is we do not know. In 1898, "A flagstaff has been erected at the extreme end of M. Point to be in charge of the lightkeeper Hammond that he may display code warning signals to passing vehicles."

Lit by a Liquid

Lighting the beacon was always a tricky business. At first, rendered right whale blubber oil was used in lanterns for lighthouses; soon it was replaced by sperm whale headcase oil, spermaceti. Often in the 1850s a "poor" strain made in winter as opposed to better quality "summer" rendered sperm oil was used which smelled smoky, had to be warmed up on the keeper's stove lest it freeze in winter. In 1856 before petroleum was discovered, newspaper reports mention the possible use of oil extracted from coal. Proving too expensive as whales both right and sperm became scarcer, whale oil was to be phased out. French-invented Colza oil made from "wild cabbage" was manufactured cheaply in 1863. Then lard oil competed for use by 1867. Petroleum, discovered in 1859, eventually was used as kerosene in the 1870s, but it proved too explosive, and so mineral oil, competitively inexpensive, became the fuel of choice. (A Harvard professor, Joseph Henry, was once head of the Smithsonian and was commissioned to experiment with all these fuels to see which was best, at "great self-endangerment.") By the 1880s, kerosene was being used safely.

Towards the turn of the century electricity was experimental; by the 1920s, fairly universal.

Light Life

The keeper early on had to catch his own dinners. A record held by U.S. Fish and Wildlife and quoted by Kate Chapman of The Cape Codder, says: "Lighthouse keeping was generally an isolated, somewhat forbidding

means of employment, with few regular responsibilities but many continual tasks. Keepers lit the lamps each day at sunset, by observation of almanac, performed...maintenance...such as cleaning lantern windows, and... light or house painting." The keeper had to trim the wicks at dawn, polish reflectors and lenses, fill lamps. He had to log all passing vessels, watching for and reporting wrecks. Sometimes he and his family were up all night if a storm blew out windows to threaten the lights when they were most needed. Glass blown out by storms had to be replaced by shutters. Condensation fogged the panes as did smoky oil; the smoke blurred out the beam. Sun could catch wicks on fire by magnifying on the reflectors to ignite them.

Images

An actor can create reality for himself in a role by a device called "sense memory." He visualizes the scene, its objects, invests them with something personal from his own life; recollects smells, touch, things which are Proustian, evocative. History is like personal memory; somehow you can pull it from the distance so that it is present. Rereading a journal, imagining; putting pieces of the past together, the images can arise palpable as MacBeth's phantom dagger, inseparable from one's own personal experience's memories. Imagination, memory, cultural memory merge. Perhaps even stored in a gene someplace like Jung's "race memory," they swell in that sea place called dream.

History, like nature, Is. History does not change. It is writ. Only the interpretation changes.

In the lighthouse, a "comfortable residence." Clean thinking rooms; inside the tower, flashing serrated beams from folds in glass, from their seams, crease the walls and my skin. Here is a daguerreotype, a drawing, a ring.

Cleansed scents of lighthouse; air fracturing by the glass panes into sunlight lines, dizzying, drifting out, caught webby in the green lee of the few woods. Storms, shadows of lanterns in strange fog are huge as seven of yourself. I have seen it myself, what Henry Beston described – as high on the airspace above the water as the light from the moon caught in that water is long.

In a refuge hut, I look out to where the Tavern had been; lean dunes twist ropey, across the plains.

Wayside huts are truly a port in a storm, like a camper's shelter in the middle of the Appalachian Trail or on Mt. Washington. (Those ones of a different context, made not for a human washed over and gagged by seaweed, no one desecrates; no one "discreates" these huts, but leave

things anonymously in place for the next.)

Sands can be shrapneled by winds and end up inside the wood. On a day when the glare was like an x-ray, on a day when the spongy salt marsh grew gravid with unexpected rains, this was a nest, a shade, a dry hideaway.

An animal's den, a writer's cover, a wooden tent, with just enough of shelter to make you comfy and just so little that you were still a piece of the place. After the cold cleared off, out of the open window frame, about at your belly's height, there was the sleek, newly brushed blue of the sky and the vain blue-green of the sea showing off across the limping, curving, slung scarfs of the dunes. While the gulls minueted up and down the yoyo winds with their soon to be galvanized crabs for gull gourmets, then you would eat a biscuit, drink a flask of water; food would be filled with the pushy, aggressive, self-willed sands, but even the grit would go down well against the vast storm of hunger. Camping outside inside.

Until the men from the land watch found you.
Dreaming back your life, surprised at making the shore –
alive, licking salt off your lips. Sweating with fear in the cold.
wave in and out
slipping off the shell of civilization; too much information; the silly endless clutter with which our lives are filled; cleansed by the winds, here is the center;
make it the center of the body, of the heart, of the universe
as any wild place may be
to see;
hearing the sands mate with the passionate seas.
unloose the curse of centering and free yourself to everything...a piece.

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Connective Umbilicals, An Undercurrent

Straining to land, viewing a distant haze in a storm, vulnerable, longing for the senses' release from a long voyage, hard-won, you see a dream of land through a storm. From the shelter of the lighthouse you set the beacons; from the short lifehouse, you look to those seas to go towards them in storm. Two different perspectives, both unleashed from other men, from time, by the limitations of your machinery. Until...

When Captain Lawson was unfrozen, small boats, lantern light and horse and carriage might carry the news of his wrecked ship to distant places. Later, how was the land linked through the sea to the mainland?

By the beginning of the Civil War, and from well before, American man was developing the technical inventions with which to dominate nature, devices to shorten time and distance, such as railroad and telegraph. But nature still ruled, particularly at sea. Until the rails would nationalize the country, we were a nation tied over the waterways to other lands.

To communicate to shore for further help to man a rescue, to communicate to ship-owners and salvagers, what would you do? Sound could be used as a shore to ship signal. Canon was used by packet lines as signals. On lighters, guns were fired once a minute to alert the shore, or a rocket with red stars was shot into night, or repeated fog horn blasts echoed out. Lighthouses carried fog whistles, charges, bells, flares and guns, before the age of wireless. The Lighthouse Board in 1889 reports the use of gongs, bells, sirens, trumpets, guns, whistling buoys which make a "sound obnoxious to the house-dweller near them," ringing with a "mournful and saddening sound." (Many a "house-dweller" submitted complaints to the Board.)

The first flag code had been standardized in the 1700s. Then there were Wig Wags, a kind of child's dream of secret codes transmitted by banners: These were 3-foot square white or red cloth with dots and dashes used to send messages by semaphore shorthand across distances. Local packet ships used flags and balls raised high on poles from 1812 through the 1870s to inform people of weather conditions and departure times. The signals used by the Black Ball line of Dennis, for example, were famed from Scargo Hill

to up and down the Cape. A version of dot dash code had been used by flag from the 1850s through the Civil War, created by the Signal Corps. The United States Life Saving Service had codified semaphore by the time of the new red houses. Other standardized flags didn't seem to reach Monomoy until 1898 when it was noted, "A flag staff has been erected at the extreme end of M. Point to be in charge of the lightkeeper Hammond that he may display code warning signals to passing vehicles." Well through the 1930s, code flags to signal off-course vessels would be required Lighthouse equipment.

Flashing fires have been used as long as man has made flames. There were flashes from lanterns, like Paul Revere's old "one if by land." Dot dash signals had been sent by lantern. Scientist Joseph Henry, apparently the same one who had suffered "self-endangerment" on behalf of light house fuel betterment, in 1831, was one of the scientists who thought of electric telegraphy and invented some of the first versions. (He was the American originator; other European and English scientists had proceeded him.) Morse invented his dots in 1838. Morse and Alfred Vail would combine minds to invent the finalized code for the electrical machinery of the telegraph. (Morse and Henry became embroiled in bitter disputes over the invention of the telegraph itself.) Telegraph used an electric impulse sent down a copper wire, suspended on poles or transmitted by cables buried in jute and gutta percha or rubber. The impulse was keyed by longs and shorts, a kind of binary system not so very different from that which computers would ultimately use. In 1844 the first overland long distance wire was sent from Washington D.C. to Baltimore. But experimental wires had been set before that date, some around the Cape.

As so often typified the nation, the intensification of invention by military need would merge with refinement of technique, motivated to develop by monetary profit. Telegraphy came into its own, after fits and starts of undersea cables for marine and other communications, during the Civil War. After the Civil War, the information technology of its day, the "talking wire" would expand its usage to protect investments in farmland, in railroads, in shipping.

I began to wonder, what was it like before? Before in the Dark Ages without mechanical light? Flag codes could be relayed to the telegraph office. Shipping merchants could potentially save time and trouble by attaching the life stations by telegraph. (I remembered teaching myself Morse code when I was ill for a time as a child. I thought it would be a great secret code to teach my friends; to use in the darkness of night to make conversation somehow, perhaps from tent to tent at camp.) Was there any kind of cable or wire, above ground or under the sea, linking the isle to land, linking rescue houses to a central Morse station? Had cable ever been strung between the Moy and Chatham for the telegraph? All

they needed was to train a man in telegraphy; simple enough if he already knew flag code and send the dots and dashes out over the talking wires. I wondered if this hypothesis had proven true, only to find out that I was close to being right, but not exactly on the money.

Underwater Telegraph

I found out that a very early telegraph cable was laid underwater between Nantucket and Woods Hole in 1840, two years after Morse invented his code. It failed. In 1856, an underwater cable from Falmouth to the Vineyard was laid by the Cape Cod Telegraph with instructions to vessels as to how to avoid tripping the wire and crippling the cable. It, too, failed. Also in 1856, the Shovelful Lightship set out flags and rang bells and cheered to celebrate the ship "Telegraph's" arrival. (This had been the first steamer ferry out of Nantucket two years before, named then the "Nebraska.") She was to lay a 13-mile cable from Nantucket to Monomoy. As she anchored, she shot off a gun. The underwater cable (manufactured by Samuel Bishop, set by A.J. Baldwin enterprises) from Nantucket was to connect to another cable previously set nine miles from Monomoy Point to Chatham Light across the flats. There it rose to an above ground wire for 2 1/2 miles by land to the telegraph office. The author of the report says cryptically that "it" failed, meaning, we suppose not just the last hook up but the whole operation.

The first successful transatlantic cable was laid in 1866, not on the Cape but from London to Newfoundland. Chatham lighthouse keeper J. Hardy notes in his diary, compiled by William Quinn and available at Cape Cod Community College's Nickerson Room, that, "This year, 1874, a new telegraph wire across the Atlantic ended at Eastham, Mass." In 1879, Orleans held the French cable near Nauset beach. (Moved in 1891 to town, you can see remnants of it at the Orleans French Cable Museum). No special underwater cable for local use went in again until, in 1887, a federal cable attached to the lifesaving service was installed from Nantucket to Woods Hole.

Signals slide back and forth between time and its objects in a trough of past and future, confining space to time. What about the changes which laced us to the machine like a woman into stays? When did they occur and where was the mechanical on my little isle, how did it intrude?

A comment on doing history: you must be like a racoon with the refuse, persistently shaking out the bag 'til absolutely every scrap drops out. Then you might find the one clue to piece together the picture. The commonplace is sometimes the hardest to discover. It is often barely documented because everyone in the Time period takes it for granted. Fact by fact, like a court case or a scientific thesis, or an archeologist with his shards, something will appear with a semblance of revivified reality.

Above Ground

In 1854, a telegraph wire at Chatham was hooked up at the general store by the old Lighthouse's twin beacons. (Oak shelves lined with musty goods.) In 1855 the Cape Cod Railroad put in its own telegraph up and down the area. In 1855, Morse's code was relayed by the Chatham Marine Observatory to Boston. But this observer's post would be soon replaced by the one at Highland Light, which was created by the Boston and Cape Cod Marine Telegraph. In 1857 when Thoreau visited, calling the new wire a "godsend to the birds," the Highland sent down messages from Telegraph Hill to Boston's Chamber of Commerce. A powerful telescope and bright signal pennants were used as well as the Morse. There was a large volume entitled "The Universal Code of Signals" which held the coded names of twenty thousand ships and an extensive system of flag signaling which by which Highland's marine observer could carry on a conversation with a vessel on almost any subject. There were the private signals of over a hundred merchants listed on the wall.

A competitor named the Cape Cod Telegraph, in 1856, had strung a wire to Provincetown from Boston connecting to the Associated Press. According to Simeon Deyo, this was the first use of telegraph by a local newspaper; a new sensation. I saw the announcement for myself on microfilm: the Yarmouth Register, calling in overnight news from Washington, D.C. Jan. 4, 1856 "on the Union (Morse) house line." (Which was franchised to the Cape Cod Telegraph.) In an advertising pamphlet the wire service says that vessels could now communicate by cipher to shore with this telegraph company's bases, manned with agents at stations in Chatham, Holmes Hole, Edgartown, Naushon, as well as Provincetown, and from those to the electric telegraph on to Boston. It beckons captains and owners to use it "for a small fee." It owned sets of cipher flags for sale in the new American (not International) code. Using such pennants as numbers 6, 5, and 9, you can say, "Be of good cheer. We will stay by you and render all the assistance in our power." (Incidentally, the Morse would also develop an international code for non-English text as well.)

A Monomoy wreck report of the 1880s speaks of men taking a message from Monomoy to telegraph via Harwich. What happened to the wire near the Chatham twin lights? Perhaps there was an outage, or the men were just closer to Harwich that day.

The USLSS Annual Report of 1881 states that, "Most of the Lifesaving and Lifeboat stations have the International Code of signals. Vessels can by this communication be reported or obtain the latitude and longitude of a station where can be determined information as to weather," or reported by flag as to whether they are crippled. And then, "a steamer tug or

Revenue cutter will be telegraphed for – where facilities for telegraphing exist – to the nearest port."

By 1886, The Monomoy Wreck Reports mention that some of the lifesaving crew "left the vessel to take a message to the telegraph office and then to return." By 1890 the telegraph near the twin Chatham lights, at the store, had been taken over by the "all consuming" Western Union. (Apparently it had been privately owned or leased until then.) By 1896 the new branch of the railroad at Chatham had a telegraph, making wired communications even more available for the town.

In 1899, October 1, one could still read in Wreck Reports of emergencies conveyed "by flag" to Chatham and back to Monomoy. And by that year or after, a lifeman of Monomoy made romantic dialogue with his wife ashore at the Old Harbor Station by blinker light. (J.A. Nickerson)

Still, no wire at the Moy.

Where there was no wire, flashes could become sound codes. Anything repeated in dit dit dit dah dah dah dit dit dit would mean "S.O.S." In 1889 the Lighthouse Board specifically reported that Morse code transmitted by fog-whistle which could be used to warn off ships from danger, was in some use from lightships to vessel.

During the 35-year height of the wire, the Moy was attached to and detached from the mainland. Even detached poles might have soldered it to shore. But I find no reference to it. Perhaps the winds would have been too strong for the poles. Nor can I see wires in photos.

Capital

Aside from private enterprise backing such devices as telegraphs, the government would seem to want to tie in. With a dynamo like Sumner Increase Kimball taking over the life services it would seem the appropriate apparatuses would be incorporated into sea saving. The lighthouse and lifesaving services did want to pioneer and to use new technology in fact; both actively sought inventions. Both listed new patents in related fields. USLSS even had a whole set of instructions for inventors wishing to show their items. Use hinged on whether they could engender political backing to fund their device. But funds were usually in short supply. While telegraph, steamships, coal fuel, mechanized mills, blast furnaces, steel (Bessemer) mills and so on came in before and after the Civil War, both government and private investment dwindled from about 1867 until the 1880s. (At this time, Cape Cod was losing population. In the past Chatham lost men to Maine and Nova Scotia; now often they departed to the American west.)

It seemed that the American daimon of an economy could not be fully loosed until she had subjugated the last of the natural men within her

bounds and used their gold and silver – their cattle and grasses, their land – to create unprecedented national wealth. The western farmers now "free" to run sheep and grow wheat on Indian land would be in turn gouged by corporate freight tariffs, gouged for government land taxes. The profits and revenues could, in part, recoup the railroads' losses, refill treasuries. The engine of finance for invention could begin anew.

As the life services came into the limelight and capital was more available due to tariffs and some internal revenue taxes on industries and goods, not on personal income – (that didn't blossom until the Second World War created a horrific war debt) – they were able periodically, to find government monies allocated to upgrade equipment and quarters.

Technology which would attach pieces of the world together took another wind: capital coupling with invention's acceleration by the 1880s to produce the Future.

Phone

The USLSS Annual Reports list further clues: By 1876, Bell's phone had been patented and was in use in some parts of America. Some of its very first uses were to connect life stations and lighthouses along a special copper wire. Off Provincetown in 1879, men drove back to town by buggy with wrecked crews they had saved, to report a disaster by mouth, while in the same year, S.I. Kimball wrote of a telegraph with a telephone hooked into it along the railroads, as helping to save ship-wrecked property. Specifically, he speaks of the linked telephone and telegraph lines put in by the Signal Service from Cape Henry to Kitty Hawk as being a wonderful addition to his branch's devices. He requests completion of this equipment for all other areas. S.I., in that year, requested more horses to convey news swiftly to central offices which had telegraphs.

Telephone would unite most of the Cape by 1882. By 1883, the "New Bedford" public phone lines covered most of the Cape, including Chatham. Still, no special phone at the Moy.

In 1887 a special telephone was planned by the USLSS for the Cape. "No assistance was rendered by the LSS except the keeper carried despatches to Chatham for transmission," in 1888. No phone. It did not go in until, as Joseph Hardy notes in 1889: "Telephone line from Monomoy to Provincetown is in by September." This was the USLSS special phone line attaching the lighthouses and lifestations by copper wire. On May 22, 1894, a returning lifestation keeper being dropped off, phones from Point Rip to the lifemen up island about a wreck he has just seen. The phone will be mentioned in ensuing wreck reports. By 1890 The Annual Report of the USLSS says that Cape Cod, Provincetown and Monomoy are all connected, and all stations in

between are as well, to call for help. "The gradual extension of the system and its intimate connection with the telegraph has proved of considerable benefit." An underwater telephone cable which went in across Chatham Bars in 1890 was faulty. It would be replaced in 1901.

That's it, problem solved. Virginity broken. No telegraph from the Moy, but a telephone. Perfect isolation unbroken by machinery until then.

No unsightly poles or wires, save for those of the copper wire to the Morris Island Station and on beyond.

Phone and Wire Link

Mysteries still exist. How exactly was the phone connected to the wire? Obviously, it would seem by telephone to the telegraph office. But it was a bit more complex.

When one reads of the Calvin B. Orcutt disaster, December 23, 1896, it seems to confirm the complexity and fragility of the new technologies. Apparently, the lifesavers were to phone to shore a message to be transmitted by that phone station by hand-tapping it onwards to a central telegraph office and out from there. (Eventually the phone would go directly to the telegraph offices.) But during the wreck of the Orcutt off Chatham in 1896, when the Chatham life station was at the north end of Monomoy, semi-detached from the mainland then, the underwater cable phone line was down between Chatham and Orleans, had been for a number of weeks, and the special USLSS phoneline between Orleans and Highland in Truro was also down. The wreck was sighted closer to Orleans. While the special phone which connected Orleans district supervisor to the Chatham station was down due to the out of order cable, the phone between Chief Superintendent Sparrow in East Orleans and Orleans was O.K.

In what seems to be a roundabout adventure to say the least, a four-masted schooner wreck was sighted by Jonathan Eldredge from the fish houses of Chatham. Then, Fred W. Nickerson Jr., a former life saver himself, went through storm to the Chatham railroad telegraph; they telegraphed the alert to Highland Light, which alerted Highland. But according to the Annual Report of the United States Life-saving Service (1898), "The Highland light observer replied that the telephone line was down between there and the Orleans Station." Nickerson then phoned Chatham station (that phone connection was still O.K.) where Captain Hezekiah Doane telephoned to his halfway house, before searching with his crew for the wreck, unsuccessfully. Meanwhile another man was entrusted with hand delivering a message to district Lifesaving Superintendent Benjamin Sparrow by morning. Sparrow traveled miles on foot trough the blizzard to the Orleans Lifestation, where station Keeper James H. Charles began a rescue too late and almost impossible

in view of the extreme weather coupled with a full moon appearing from behind the snow to drag the very high tides with her. The bodies washed up on Monomoy beach where, it has been said, everything washed off Cape will end up. (Sparrow lost some of his eyesight and by some accounts, later his mind, allegedly due to the trauma and physical burdens of his long trek and failed rescue.) I love this story, in spite of its tragedy, because in it, for a time an ounce of it more, nature is still secure in her dominance.

In 1898 the Old Harbor Station, was newly built at Chatham near Orleans in the Duluth style, as a response to the Orcutt fiasco. After all this trouble had been gone to add another lifestation, the new wireless transmissions would add ease to ship to shore communications. By 1899, wireless was tested on a Lighthouse Service lightship out of San Francisco. The message was "Sherman in sight." Dan Sealy, curator of Old Harbor Life-Saving Station Museum in Provincetown (the building was moved from Chatham to a more dramatic site at Race Point), told me an amusing story about wireless inventor Guglielmo Marconi: He promised the Wellfleet man who received the first transatlantic message a new horse if he killed his own riding as fast as possible to the telegraph station. I think the man did kill his horse. (He wanted a new one.)

In 1910, a 166-foot-high mast made of Oregon pine was installed for the wireless at the Monomoy Point life-saving station. (A Chatham Historical Society note exclaims, "next the aeroplane.") The tentative umbilical of technology was now secured, even to Monomoy. By 1915 radio (wireless) was in use aboard most ships.

(I conjure) the blackness of a night on the sea with only lanterns to guide you. After the Village, after the tourists left Middletown, still I slept in a spare berth as the rain falls, waiting for the wind to change to a northeaster, the barometer to drop; pressure to fall, to turn it to a flailing storm, to hear a foghorn off one of the lightships proclaim trouble, or see a patrol's flare go off, to hear someone knock at the door, tell me to get ready to go out into the flame of wind and cold while the keeper and his wife in his stark, homey place polishes the glass. Here in that nook, even as I tossed thinking of the wrecks, I was cut off from the outer world; sea-salty, moon-influenced, snuggling in your bed – what umbilical cord would connect you to the land, to safety, to help in the encompassment of storms before incipient industrialism? Before the phone was in? Just like the colonials: you and the danger, the camaraderie of success when you had saved that schooner and could see her out of the blackness now.

In the dark ages, what attached man to the shore? Beach patrols could set their huge stacks of wood into bonfires from shore to ship. The surfmen could

go out to save her. Messages could be conveyed by rider to other stations if more help was needed. Then sound or sight codes to an onshore light such as the one at Chatham could be telegraphed from nearby on to a marine observer; wire from there to Boston to let ship owners take action. Then the salvagers raise her. Or the Revenue Cutters break her up, drag her off if she proved intractable. A sloop could founder. Flares, lights, bells, bullets or foghorns, canon or torch blaze could signal the distress through fog or the night from ship to shore. I think of the evolution: lifesaving by sail, by oar; by signal flag and beacon, then telegraph and soon the telephone; the use of Lyle-guns with their canon and grapple device to hook onto wrecks; then just about concurrent with World War One, the radio's advent and a predomination of more mechanized boats to be saved and to save with; and more recently Loran units for navigational information – one of which was at Monomoy Point during World War Two – even helicopters and planes for rescue. Far fewer ruins now were there afloat in this water: Dreaming Science had made safety in dominion over the weathers. The cut-off from the rest of the world would be broken, over forever. In a good cause. But. How penetrated by technology could the world stand to be? Even in the name of saving lives? Without becoming a used old whore? If we did not use science in a saner context, it became its own deadly engine, for all its benefits.

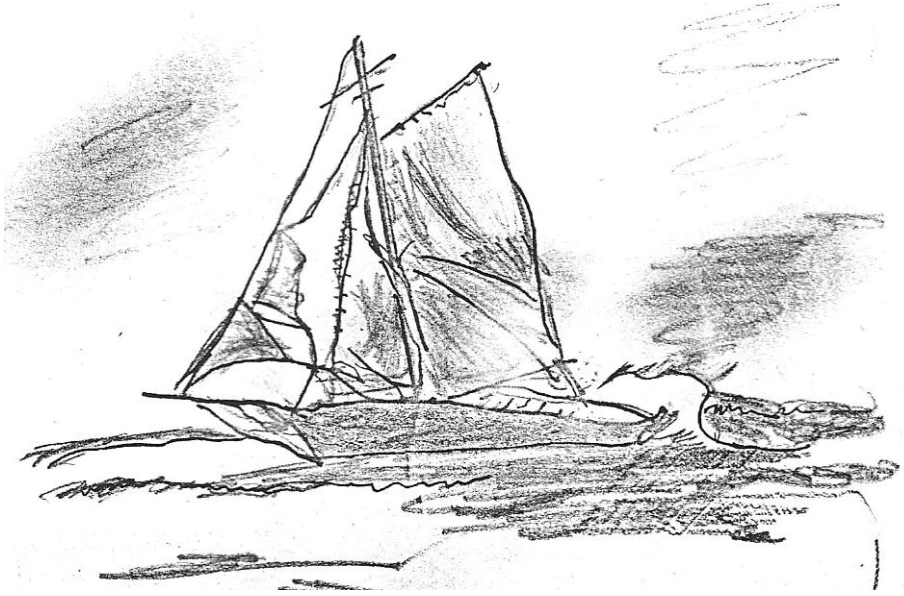
Afterwards, the daring of sailors, captains, fishermen, lifesavers, wreckers, lightkeepers, lightship men, which might be celebrated publicly onshore, would entail dignitaries coming in by rail to the gothic Victorian, red and yellow, Methodist-camp-like train station; horses and coaches waiting to clack down the dirt and dust roads; faces to be photographed for the newspapers, news to be transmitted outwards. But before? How much of the celebration could take place in aloof privacy offshore – in a world of its own? (Jaunty, at sea, in my peacoat, clear-complected with a tailored handsome set of cheekbones, made finer by the sea – my blonde hair, my dark hair...away.)

Down the beach, fishermen, sailors convey goods for the body, some necessary: wood for fires, fish; goods less necessary, china, spices. Then they are gone ashore. An emptier isle now, save for we professionals who privateered life from death. Far less secure than Monomoyicks, we people sent out to make their living from the elementals, to make their fortunes against the elementals, no matter their mood, were at their mercy, could not tuck down behind a brush shelter, change their tack and tactic for the week's survival.

Men who turn away from their own integration into the provisions of hoof and river to exploit a singular thing might be too much at risk and might break certain universal laws in desperation and so cause conflict. By

this way they put themselves under physical (and mental) overlords who might save them or regulate them, police them, martial them, minister to them. In losing a wholeness with the elementals, they lose the ability to regulate themselves, relaxed and sure, under their own self-control...

The rain begins. Pitch pines and cedar say hush in back of the house. Stepping down into a room half in the ground, I see a stove where a colonial hearth is in my mind. A field slopes uphill. I daydream of what it was like to be onshore safe in the more temperate areas, while the husband was on Monomoy, assigned for three months at a time in the winter to the new rescue stations. Almost like waiting for a sea captain to return. Secured in a swath of distance. Even when the summer people came. Even in the camps at Inward with other people around, we all shared in the wide secluded excitement. More than on the main shore. No matter how much space there was on the shore, you were still not away from the complexities of 19th and, before you knew it, 20th century life. No matter how much distance from others, that space could be lonely. Somehow here it never was. I pretend to wake in the last cabin at Powder Hole. Behind me is the swell of beach- heathered dune, feathery mauve inlets; in front, a sunset over a swale of inlets with nobody, just the peace of solitude. The last place to be in which to feel the odd thick shape of privacy, the shade of solitude, of secluded removal, without the distraction of, the noise of the human world. In blizzard or the sweet heat of spring. Not cut off, but complete. On Monomoy, one was removed; until the vacationers could come in droves with their motor buggies.



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Camps Decline

Lonely, the lifehouse and the lighthouse flourish. According to the diary of Asa Jones's son in 1886, on the Fourth of July, it seemed nobody came out for the traditional clambakes and parties. He and his mother go blackberrying, perhaps ashore, perhaps in the shrubs around the lighthouse. Bluefish were still running; Jones and his papa caught 81 one August 10th in the 1880s. Few tourists use the island. Wealthy out of town swells may no longer come to "hotels," but from summer through fall at least, they and the local Chathamites shot, and sport sailors raced. Capers, the occasional fishers, salvagers or lobstermen had camps near the Hole in their season.

In 1889, the Piccadilly, a store known as a market, along with its land then occupied by I.A. Chase, was sold to Leander Gould by Captain F. McKuen's estate for $540, to be installed with dry goods by a John J. Howes. Powder Hole which had begun to draw even deeper at high tide by the 1870s' end, opened more through the 1880s. In 1891, a large, disabled schooner was able to draw anchor there. By 1900, mention is made of anchor draggers like Elmer Mayo able to "park" at the Hole. Before then, by 1897, resorters came yacht-slooping back to Powder Hole, at least to celebrate the Fourth of July, if the debated date on the old photo is correct.

Much of Cape fishing was still in decline. Population fell. Chatham in 1890, operated her sheet iron and shoe factory; offered numerous goods and services, such as furnishings, groceries, hardware. She still had her flour and grain mills; she packed some cranberries; ran wharves, marine rails, may still have had a tannery.

Cape commercial farming consisted of turnips, asparagus, onions, strawberries, dairying and fowl, and the continuing cultivation of the cranberry.

Increasingly Global Again, the 1880s-1890s

We had become more Americanized in the past decades; now we were again to expand our range. The same factors worked on a national level

as they had during the days of a coastal republic. It cycled all over again: depletion of certain national materials, plus the desire for new resources and for new markets, plus the ability or desire to expand which the new machines gave us, led us by the 1880s to look over the world from Asia to Latin America for the lands' (and seas') goods which we could add to those of the north Americas.

By the late 1880s we were becoming an upwardly mobile people once more. We sought not only the west but the world in which to make our fortune. A new globalism had begun. Through the stages of the Cape and our island, from the nomads to the wooden, classically constructed houses and ships, to the age of metal, concrete block, and plastic, everything had spiraled: deforestation, regrowth; fish cycles; globalism, nationalism, globalism – narrowing and renewing. The nearing onset of the 20th century, with its thickening cities and towns, would cast that spiral into larger and larger loops which took more and more with them each time.

Manifest Destiny, which began in the west in the 1860s as a belief codified by the Big Horners, an Aryan association of cattle mongers, had declared a white Christian right given by God to take Indian lands for progress. The idea swept the nation: American supremacy, a God given right to take what we needed: the rich from the poor, the United States from other countries. Wounded Knee's massacre in 1890, to avenge Custer's death of 14 years before, was the final blood blow in endless cruel strikes against Indian peoples and their lands. Now the farmers and the "little" businessmen found themselves the "Indians" against the "cowboys and soldiers," allied against monopolies of men like JP Morgan and Rockefeller. Political voices like Teddy Roosevelt espoused antitrust action on the one hand, at home; they backed expansionism on the other. We began to see the Americas south of us as a new base to monopolize for our ever-enlarging needs. Wanted was not only fuel for the new inventions, but raw material for manufacture; not merely oil and fibers, not only minerals, but vegetable stuffs such as rubber, coffee, pineapple. Purse seiner Isaiah Baker's relative, Lorenzo Baker of Wellfleet, had brought the first bananas back from South America. The United Fruit Company began. North America's United States began to seek dominions where, prophetically, Monroe's doctrine had attempted to keep the markets of the Americas free from competition and intervention by the Old World.

The U.S. had its first war to establish its nation as a global sea power with the Spanish American conflict of 1898. It gave us bases in the Far East, in the Philippines; areas which we had not dominated before, in Latin America.

By the 1890s, with the frenetic inventions of Edison and Ford, if nature

had begun to be coopted in her own lands, now we could collect varied treasures from the attendant plantations, a new colonialism implanted upon the world beyond, as technology, wealth, transportation, information and "protection" by navies, wars overt and covert – the larger sheriffhood we invested ourselves with – would allow. Technology and the quiet conquests by economic seduction, if not by outright arms, gave us access to cheap labor, expanding markets, and ever more raw resources for foods and to transform into goods, from ghetto sweatshops on our own turf, to the poorer countries throughout the world, all in the name of a new kind of Manifest Destiny. While some resented this, many, both the go-getters and the gotten, would willingly embrace the "new and improved" life which invention afforded. If we were in fact colonizing what would be known as the Third World, to say so would, by the rise of the twentieth century, brand you as beyond the pale. Eventually all criticism of an exploitative ethic at home or abroad, could be quelled simply by saying that the critics (whether they knew anything of Marxist economics or not) were "Bolsheviks" or "communists," or at least culpable cultural heretics, looking the gift horse of Progress in the mouth. The irony was that invention itself in many ways created not only the causes of American labor movement, but of redistributive 20th century revolutions, in reality, civil wars, in which certain exotic nations wrapped in archaic feudalism would indulge. Still others would revolt against the colonialism the new industrial age brought upon them, even as the United States had herself rebelled.

The Twentieth Century, Technology and...

After a depression clogged some revived impetus briefly in the 1890s, the motor of invention coupled with capital, revved up once more to chug along for decades. As mill towns increased, as electric power developed, the Technical Revolution gained full swing. Middletown's rise and fall had seen in its brief time the steam and coal mill towns turn into factory towns, cities expand, tenements and ghetto slums upsurge by its closing. The Machines by the 1890s multiplied our power, intensified our means to convert the living flesh of the earth into (permanent or not so) goods, partitioned man into uses of Nature, Culture – where nature once had been culture.

By the new century, man's fight against the weather, seas, the land - his quest for technical control was becoming finalized. Developed before the new century, in 1903, Marconi's wireless sent that first Cape Cod dispatch. Petroleum came of age for use in the internal combustion engines of the war weapons of the First World War. And soon there would be the aeroplane and automobile. Both were lamented by Monomoiers, even

while some mainlanders rejoiced in them, at first.

Electricity would wire cities and factories together by the century's turn. The change from a natural world to a technical one was made quintessential by Communication. The adversary to nature, perhaps even beyond all material equipment, was the fast transmission of the information with which to further transmute her. We had begun a huge spywork against the elements so as to have better control over our goods. Strange new paradoxes would arise from invention: while offering humans seeming independence, it would make humans dependent on it - less independent in themselves, less interdependent amongst each other. Industrialization, fast communications, divorced man from the earthy contact he had with his planet, to lose his hands' prime abilities, to lose his senses' contact with the seasons; to lose contact with his fellow man.

It would be difficult to have the "good life" which the new economy and inventions promised without harming something or someone somewhere. The dilemma of how to synthesize a softer tech of science with a decentralized, more tribal, natural life, in order to have all which varied cultures could offer, less destructively, more inclusively for all the world, not just for those who can afford it in a monetary globe only, is the one which has hounded my generation, having been handed down to us so persuasively from Scott and Helen Nearing, and from their predecessors in the Brook Farms of the 19th century. Some of us have given up trying to figure it out; some of us opted solely for comfort, if we can afford it; some of us have chosen to accept everything; some of us to keep some crazed idealism burning to fuel just and gentle solutions, despite all. Most people would like to enjoy life according to their precepts, without hurting others or the earth – if only they could find out how.

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New Lifestation at the Point

After the century turned, a famed disaster offshore would motivate the building of a new lifestation. The wreck was of the Wadena on March 17, 1902. (It is so odd the way dates form a trough throughout history: March 17, the evacuation of Boston by the British in 1776, the slaughter by Reynolds of Lakota and Cheyenne in 1876 which announced the last round of the Sioux wars, St. Pat's Day, the Ides of March.) The Wadena incident was a snafu from the start. On March 16th, the schooner-rigged barges Wadena and John C. Fitzpatrick, being towed by the tug Sweepstakes past Shovelful Shoals, were grounded in a northeaster. The Sweepstakes hawsers broke; it chugged off to Boston.

As one of the many Chatham Bearses writes, a surf patrolman noted 60 to 80 miles an hour winds with snowy, rainy visibility so bad that he could not see the lights of the lighthouse though he was right up against it as he phoned to the lifestation over the special copper wire nearby. The salvage boat, the tug Peter Smith, trying to refloat one of the towed, grounded barges, took off men from her as a new storm swept up. Unable to rescue more, the captain headed to Hyannis to Captain Eldredge at the Monomoy station.

A team of wreckers from Chatham, supervised by the adept salvager and boatman Captain Elmer Mayo, began to salvage the Fitzpatrick the next day. That morning, Monomoy lifesavers out of Middle Station received that call from Hyannis to check on the Wadena. Station Chief Marshall Eldredge, took the morning patrol and saw that the Wadena was in fact, flying a distress flag. He and the crew went out to rescue any left behind. The crew's life jackets were omitted, perhaps because the boss was phoning while his crew assembled, maybe because they were in a rush after a morning drill to test the equipment, or perhaps because going out without jackets was something more than one crew did. (It was a kind of pride for these jaunty men, a game of manhood: meeting the challenge fairly or equally perhaps, without tricks. They became so nervy that in 1880 the savers did not want to wear their cork lifebelts lest they be seen

as cowards while floating by a competing station downcoast, Merryman, chief inspector of the Life Saving Service wrote.)

The sea struck over the lifeboats which were back-oaring in high seas, forcing the crew to cut saving lines to the barge. The surfboat was uncontrollable. A 300-pound man jumping in literally broke the thwarts; other crew members froze or went panicky. The surfboat overturned. One of the surfmen said, as he let go of the boat, "I have to go now." (A ghastly paraphrase of the lifesaver's motto.) Everyone went under but lifesaving man Seth L. Ellis, who valiantly tried but failed to rescue both the barge's men and his own crewmates.

Captain Elmer Mayo on the Fitzpatrick, saw what was happening and rowed to Ellis in a dory to rescue him and the rest of his crewmates. Ellis was the sole survivor. Captain Eldredge had been responsible for saving many wrecks. At least one time he and his men had responded to two in one day. Now he and they were the dead victims.

Mayo would be named "the Hero of Monomoy." His wife would jokingly call him "The Hero" for the rest of his life. Ellis was later made the Middle Station chief. Both received medals. But Ellis and Mayo would end up not speaking to each other. The reason is unclear, but it may be that Ellis claimed later had everyone listened to his instructions and stayed calm, fewer lives, including Eldredge's, would have been lost.

After the Wadena disaster, the need for a station at Monomoy Point, for which men like lifestation Captain Tuttle had long agitated, was finally perceived. It was erected late in 1902, according to Dalton's *Lifesavers of Cape Cod*. It sported the newest in life equipment, with 2 beach carts, and 3 new surfboats, one of which was the only self-righting, self-bailer on the Cape. There were even three horses, including one particularly recalcitrant and ugly, overweight nag, named Susan. USCG historian Seaman Dan Moreau says the horses proved too balky about pulling boats and so were discontinued. The place also had a duck for a mascot. Each man in the crew had a cat.

Sumner Increase Kimball in 1894, after his retirement, described in a report standard equipment as: two breeches buoys, a life car, 20 cork life jackets, two heaving sticks,12 signal rockets, International Code flags, medicine chest, barometer, thermometer, lanterns, Costons (those handguns which shot out red flares), tools, fuels, horses, stationery, regular clocks, special clocks to account for lifesaving hours. Water was to be collected on roofs where there was none or brought in by supply boat. The Blue Jacket Manual supplied a review of the techniques for saving men, should anyone forget their training. Outbuildings were replete with

anchors, tackle and block, ropes, carrying wheels; boats and boat carriages to roll them down the ramps. The new station's accoutrements would be about the same.

The Monomoy Point Station had a new architecture based on the squarer lines of the Duluth government designs developed at first in Minnesota for stations near the Great Lakes in the late 1800s. It had a spacious hipped roof with a flat top and slanted sides. The tower was higher and squarer than Middle Station. Boathouse doors were off to the right (from inside) rather than to the left. It may have had central heat by 1910, indoor plumbing by 1928. It had dormers and a porch. The living quarters were arranged as in the old Red Houses but were more commodious.

The first Point station captain was Joseph Kelley, 29 who had served on various lightships and was born the year Middle Station was built.

By 1915 the USLSS would become the United States Coast Guard and by 1939 the Lighthouse Service too, was absorbed by the USCG.

Boats

According to Dan Sealy, Old Harbor Life-Saving Station Museum's curator, surfmen were not only boatmen who excelled but handy people who could adapt the latest techniques of design before they became official commercial technology. That they were good with their hands is confirmed by F. A. Burrows who reported that Captain Eldredge of Chatham and then Middle Station, the very same who died at the Wadena disaster, as well as Captain Howes of Monomoy Point sometime after 1907, both handcrafted elaborate whirligigs and windmills for sale, worth a great deal now. "The Cape men like unadorned, light shells," comments a USLSS Annual Report. in the 1870s. These were still modelled like a whale-canoe: 26'7" long with a 7'5" beam, a 12" draft, flat bottomed, double pointed oak planked lifeboats carrying six men, five crew and a captain.

By the 1870s at least, the Monomoy boat (not to be confused with the racing sloop) for Middle Station can row six on a side, six sets of oarlocks, for its special sized crew of seven. From the 1870s on through the 1900s, the Monomoy surfboat was designed and redesigned with a wide, shallow draft always; but some had a removeable centerboard, some had a fixed centerboard, or none. (Centerboards were variously dated as invented in 1809, first applied to a sloop in Eastham in 1824 according to writer, Haynes Mahoney – or invented in Harwich sometime after the 1850s. Whenever the invention, they were more widely used by the 1870s.) Some accounts add a rudder to it; air chambers and cork covers to balance it, to block it from shock. It always had a very long steering oar which could be used to "pole" the boat, as well for a temporary use-mast to carry a sail.

By the 1870s, 24' 8 " long, 6'6" beam, it was no longer oak-planked, but lapstrake cedar. By 1898, 50 had been built by Jenkins and used. The men continued to adapt boats to fit their own need, developing new versions of the Monomoy and the Race Point out of the lightweight Beebe McLellan's invented in the 1870s for use around Long Island. The Beebe McLellan was reinvented in 1899, redesigned by natty naval Lt. McLellan and boat designer Beebe. It was the reinvention which created the false-floored, self-bailing, self-righting possibly "tinned" boats, capable of placing up to 12 wrecked within. The Point Station was to possess some of these along with the traditional Monomoys. In 1907 a motorized version of this surfboat was given rave reviews in a wreck report by none other than Captain Ellis. By 1964 it was commented, "Launching of the surf-boat – today it is the White Elephant that leaves a dock or a mooring, directed by radio." These were no more the light rowing shells, but motor vessels, complete, soon, with Loran's sonar, with radar, with motorized saving equipment; but sometimes these boats themselves, it was said, needed help to avoid grounding.

Three Stations

For many years there were actually three lifestations on Momomoy, depending on its status as attached to or detached from land. In 1872 the Chatham Lifestation was situated at the north end of Monomoy. In 1876 and 1878, according to the USCG it was moved across the cut to Morris Island to escape erosion but by 1880 Monomoy was attached enough to Morris Island to make the Chatham station one of two on her. In November of 1886, according to Keeper Josiah Hardy, it was rafted back to north Monomoy. An old photo in one of author William Quinn's books shows a lifestation all of a piece, as if someone had lifted it with a huge spatula to place it, like a serving, on a plate of raft. As Monomoy remained attached to Morris Island after 1902 or so, so did the Chatham station, making three lifestations on Monomoy briefly. In 1908 Chatham station fell into the sea. Buildings from Inward possibly were floated to Morris Island in 1914 to be used for the rebuilt Chatham station until 1936. Monomoy kept two lifestations: Middle Station and Monomoy Point Station.

Crews

Cape crews were for the most part seven: five men and a keeper with a standby or winter man, added on December 1. Monomoy Middle Station crews were nine: seven for crew, one winter man, one keeper. (Most pictures show the fairer weather crews in their whites and waders, six with keeper, sometimes eight in all, always seeming to leave out someone. Photos have the intensity of air in them, of people who breathed the strong Cape breezes; people vital with the outdoors.) By 1936, 10 men

were assigned to the Point.

In the late 1870s, crews were on from September 1 to April 1. In the 1880s, from Dec. 1 to April 30, with a temporary crew of one man from September 1 to November 30, who would send a message to the other men if an off-season disaster occurred. This must have been insufficient coverage, for by 1883 the crew stayed from September 1 to May 1. Later the assignment would be from October to August. The idea was to cover the 10 worst months of the year. At the beginning of the 1900s, crews added summer men who held other jobs in winter, according to Dan Sealy. From June to September these men would replace the regular crew. In July and August there were "no wrecks," but just in case, the keeper was, by the 1900s, on all year round. By 1900, Middle Station men were on from August 1 through the fall and winter and spring, until June 1. The captain was on duty when the men were away in the summer. Probably the Point crew had a similar schedule. By the 1930s, the Coast Guard rearranged schedules. For those at the Point, as elsewhere, duty would be 10 days on, two days off, year-round, with vacations.

Lifemen

When J.W. Dalton wrote in the early 1900s, Captain Seth Ellis had taken over for the late Marshall Eldredge as station chief. At that time the Monomoy men listed at the Middle Station were surfmen Walter Bloomer, Thomas Kane, Edwin Studley, George Cahoon, Walter Wixon, Thomas Bearse, Frank Thomas, Marcus Smith.

In 1902 the first crew at the Point Station under Captain Kelley were Joseph Bloomer (born on Prince Edward Island, unlike the other Bloomer above), John Ellis, Obed Shiverick, Edwin Clark, Reuben Eldredge, Joseph Christie, John Ryder, and Charles Hamilton, substitute. Most were Chatham, Harwich, Provincetown men. One was from Manchester, New Hampshire.

"1926, Arthur Griffin to be nm. 1 man under J. Kelley." (Both were to be characterized in the silent film "Rugged Waters.")

In 1936: "Crew at Monomoy Point were John Caton CBM, Geo Hallett, BLM, Surfmen Lawrence Enos, Harold Simmons, Howard Matteson, Walter Love, Edmond Cowan, Albert De Costa, Robert Dean, Chester Henderson. (I wish I could list all the men who risked their lives; these are only some names which the notes of historians have kept.)

Joseph Bloomer had been in trade between Portland and the West Indies. He had "few equals a lifesaver." Obed Shiverick described as "brave and efficient," had once been in charge of the Nantucket Lightship. Joseph Christie was a Scot who had served in the U.S. Navy in the Spanish American War (Theodore Roosevelt and the newspapers' war to preserve American

plantations in Cuba during its civil war). Charles Hamilton, substitute who was a Grand Banker, lobsterman and wrecker, had "attended every wreck in the area for 15 years and who knew the locale of every rip and shoal." He lived at Monomoy Point year-round. Many lifemen were, in their off-duty months, wreckers, barge towers, draggers, salvagers, lightship men, boatmen, sailors on "coastwise" vessels, Grand Bankers.

How much of the danger of the offshore pushed men to stay ashore for good, or, in the case of the surfmen, may have motivated them to help those hindered by exposed situations they themselves had been in? Reuben Eldredge, born the year the Civil War ended, had fished for cod in the Grand Banks. Through a thick fog, Dalton relates, Eldredge lost touch with his vessel and was tossed about in an open dory for five days with no food or water. Unconscious, he was picked up by a French boat and returned to his boat. Still, he rode back up the humped seas, bucking on the "banks." Later "he quit the sea" to become a nearshore fisherman and a wrecker around Monomoy. "Perfectly at home in a boat under any and all conditions of wind or weather, the sea has no perils for him." Captain Seth Ellis, born Oct. 12, 1858, had a father who traded to the West Indies. Ellis had shipped to fish mackerel at age 15 and had been fishing since the age of 9. He had been one of the first to man the first steamboat to catch mackerel, "the Novelty," and had gone coasting on a three-masted schooner which was wrecked by a blizzard. Somehow its captain had taken her, without a foremast, bowsprit, jibboom, main topsails, cabin, or forecastle, "out of the track of all shipping" in to rescue. But the crew had "suffered terribly." One man had been a Grand Banker at age 11 in 1885, then switched to dory fishing off Chatham, perhaps as a result of a similar mishap?

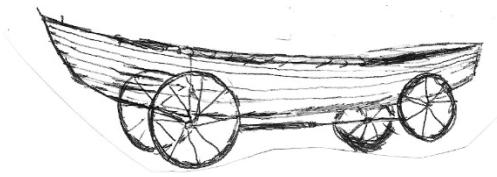
How did it change a man's nature, the various views of the sea? There was the view of the offshore fisherman who left land but soon returned to its mounded dunes from the shoals of fishes. There was the coaster, who, like the offshore fisher, was still part of the land. There was the seaman who left the local shores, the familiar sea roads, to raid other waters for distant ice-bound whales, to travel perhaps for years with a promise of shares divided at the end. (Some, having spent their allotted money for supplies on board, would be euchred out of their money.) There was the seaman who had travelled for years, deceived into impressment by bad grog, sheared off from the past earth. There had been world travelers who lost every tie with land, so that sea and sky, weathers and stars, petrels and albatrosses into whose realm they came, became realer than the figments of earth's ground. What did the trade goods mean, the luxuries of trade, the land, the home? And the men beyond the shore edges, the Bankers, the traders, conditioned by the slip of coughing seas making a constant sound

under their balconies: did it divorce them from a certain rationality? Did it divorce them from a kind of "Morality" as an excursion upon constant desert might? Did it limit their desires to provide for themselves on land from the land? Did the core of their maleness change, content to seek the hold of their dim homes for comfort; happy as long as they had enough money in their pockets to buy what they wanted? So different from farmers, from hunters. Did the convenience of a currency of fish obviate the need to develop any other skills of self-provision?

And the men of the sea and the shores, of the edges – the lifemen, how did they respond, trained with the lantern shifts which make shadowy siftings over the dunes? The lighthouse keepers, campers, people of the shores, usually without the seas beneath them directly, did they all want to have a measure of independent subsistence; to grow their gardens, catch their lobsters, bluefish, bass, dig their clams, live free and open under the fixed light which sketched its beams out towards an insecure, fluid lane? And the original farmers, did hard work make them want to exchange their fruits for ease? Did they gain or lose respect for the animals they cossetted to fatten for sale, even as they turned against the wild ones which could threaten them? Did they enjoy their lands here as the farmers of western Massachusetts had, or did – as the western inhabitants asserted of the eastern ones – the wet, salty, fishy shores give them a wanderlust, a wish to escape the confines of corn for the fast damp luxuries of whale oil and bone, of cod and of trade?

How did the male and femaleness change?

I lie in the barracks in the dorm above the mess. There is a curvy glass kerosene lamp beside the window, still on. Light smooths and clouds the shiplap, seasoned, pine wood wall planks. I have no privacy here, none when I sleep, little when I wait as other men patrol. I miss my family, the soft featherbed of the shore, the big house. I wonder why I chose to go out in the coldest, meanest weather when other men are asleep with their wives in their beds. How many hours had I turned day into night, walking into a headwind with my lantern after dusk?



In unpublished notes it is written that in 1903, "Captain Seth Ellis, sole survivor of the Monomoy Disaster, later got cold feet when a wreck was on the shoals and a subsequent investigation as to why he could not go when a bunch of fishermen could go, resulted in his getting out of the service.

Captain Ellis and crew of Monomoy has been under secret investigation during the past made by the gov. officials and stenographers. The case investigates the failure of the crew to do what a volunteer crew did in saving a wrecked crew last winter." In 1907, E.A. Studley takes Ellis's place.

In 1904, Walter Bloomer fisher, boatman, wrecker before he was a lifeman, did "not stick with the service but went fishing and spent the winters up in the city." 1915-"Walter Bloomer was caught in a squall off Monomoy Point and narrowly escaped drowning. Volunteer Crew manned Mass. Humane Soc. boat and pulled out to rescue. In the meantime, Bloomer attempted to reach the shore in his own boat which was capsized. Lifemen reached them after exhaustion had set in."

"Richard E. Ryder was Capt. of the Chatham Station on Morris Island, and was also a Stand-by at Monomoy – was he there when it burnt down? He went up in the woods and shot himself with a service 45 caliber revolver." (Leaving a family of two sons two daughters.)

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Camps Reappear, Lighthouse Is Decommissioned

World War One Comes

In 1909, a cow, chicken and horse, lived with the Jennings family at the Monomoy lighthouse. They were also accompanied by plenty of wood and paint with which to repair and keep the place. Jennings speaks of furniture brought over by buoy tender (still a lightship service adjunct); of the land over the flats as filled with quicksand into which horses sank; of the place retaining something mystical: his father lost a ring his wife gave him only to recover it miraculously revealed in the mud flats upon leaving his assignment there. (One wonders: Was the internal stuff of his life matched as harmoniously with his external deeds?) In the 1880s and 1890s, as we have mentioned, a few such as gunners still had camps on the island. Summer weather, sunbathers' dunes, would see the area soon start to come alive with cabins again as some recreational shanties again went up by 1910. The revival of camps would be interrupted by a war.

On shore, electricity flashed its network over the globe. But technology still could not control the seas. In a ten-year period, between 1907 and 1917 alone, when merchant-marining was becoming increasingly mechanized, it is said that 156 vessels were lost at Monomoy's east side. As Kittredge said, the hulks from the total of Monomoy wrecks laid end to end "would make a wall" up and down the east side of the Cape.

Industrialization, motors, airplanes, ships, factories, coal and oil had turned Europe and America into states vying for resources in South America, in Africa, the Pacific and the Far East. America was trading with China, Latin America, Japan, and had established businesses or protectorates throughout the Philippines, in Cuba, Latin America.

In 1918, the Russian Revolution had passed, and World War One, begun in 1914, was ending; a U boat fired on the island. America had participated for only a year, while Europe had endured for four in one of the bloodiest most fatal conflicts since our own Civil War. World War One was the first one to use the newly released powers of invention for world dominance.

This terrible war would increase the mechanization for destruction which would characterize much of the 20th century.

After World War One

By 1920 or so, there would be a deep harbor at Powder Hole, a shallow one above Inward Point. But with engined craft there was less need for the depth. The anchorages probably took gas-engined boats, yachting pleasure sloops, 24-foot centerboard catboats, salvage boats.

By the 1920s, the beautiful Grand Bankers with their adjustable masts for winter and summer which sailed from the Gulf of Maine to the Canadian borders, which could return with 56,000 brined fishes ready to sun dry for sale on huge flakes of wicker or wood, were sailing less and less. The little boats would prevail once more. From Chatham, even during times when they no longer could set pound nets or weirs because laws limited their use in depleted waters, fleets of the catboats continued out, sailed by solitary hand liners of the Monomoy rips and shoals. J.A. Nickerson described the solo fisherman taking his catch back, gutting it, brining it as he returned to those shanties, some of which are still tucked into Chatham coves, in which gear, ropes, salting, pickling barrels were stored along with slickers, boots, blankets – just as at the beginning of its evolution into a fishing townlet. The fish, drying in a man's garden next to his cow, would look like the "collar bones of men" or "stacked maple wood," according to Thoreau, and they were the "fuel to maintain our vital fires." The picture in the early 20th century may not have been much different.

Like a busker play which takes down its sets and puts them up again, more and more was the Point a resort again. In the '20s, there were 22 cabins at Inward Point (then also named Hammond's Bend), some belonging to year-round fishermen. Hunters continued to have shacks above Inward. Hunters and fishers sometimes are one and the same, but other times have a tentative suspicion of one another, so the north end remained the hunter's end, while the piece below Inward and down to the south became more the domain of campers and fishers. In spite of the changes in the outer world, the two lifestations, the lighthouse, the Branters, had for company some of the same occupations of the past: lobstermen set up around the Hole; salvage men, Chatham anchor draggers (by then becoming famous around the Cape for retrieving lost chains and anchors) lived in camps around the Coast Guard station; some of the houses or their sites dated back to Whitewash Village.

In 1928 a flotilla of balloon-tired Model As were photographed, as Monomoy enjoyed yet more of a tourist resurgence. Changes were coming to intrude on even the world of paradise.

And then the beach buggy and the barge brought visitors to the primitive comforts of the Point. The brightness of electricity and the noise of oil powered boats, of automobiles with their engines – were beginning to intermittently come on – to introduce permanently the age of massness.

Lighthouse Last Light

The lighthouse was recorded in the 1900s as still having a red tower. Decommissioned in 1923 when the Chatham Light replaced all its functions, it had never used the electrified lamps introduced to lighthouses in the 1920s, though generators during the Second World War would light the Lifestation. Even as the lighthouse itself was no longer used, the nearby Point life station recorded a flurry of ship sightings during the days of Prohibition. Flappers imbibed throughout Prohibition from 1919, beyond the 1929 crash of the stock market, on through the Great Depression into 1933. Cape photographer Bill Quinn, reports that the Coast Guard had a fleet of Revenue Cutter corsairs used for fighting the rum runners. I can't find whether anyone was surprised rum running at the Moy. Fishing writer Phil Schwind's little boat was boarded by suspicious coastmen, (as were many boats) but not near Chatham. Coastmen certainly did flag down men running out to fish during the Second World War for violating gas rationing. Nickerson reports using his motorized catboat in an emergency, being chased near the Moy for it. (Did hanky-panky go on where the Coast Guard and its special anti-rum runners couldn't see, or turned a blind eye?)

Light Men

Some of the men who had served at the now dead light were David Bearse, the forebear of Eleanor Henderson who had owned so much of Monomoy. He may have served in the 1850s or even been the first light keeper in his youth. His son in law Asa Nye, and Asa's father before him also kept the light. Gentlemen like Asa Jones, who had captained a lightship and the light, who kept his Monomoy garden growing in imported loam, were to be fondly remembered for a lifetime. In 1896, Asa Jones retired from the light after some 20 plus years to become a chandler at Harding's Beach, near where Howes had some wharves.

In 1922, he (or Asa Nye, there is some confusion) reached 101 years of life. Captain Stephen Howes replaced Jones. In 1889, Charles Hammond came to the light, not as a keeper, apparently as an assistant. In 1908 Charles Howes became keeper. Was he a relative of Stephen's or of landowner Collins Howes? (Many of the records for this era have burned in fires at Town Hall.)

In 1910 died James Smith, yet another keeper. (He may have been a descendant of a wealthy Chatham family who started out in the colonies

with over 100 acres of farmland, and ownership of no less than six farms throughout Orleans and Chatham.) The doctor had been called out, but the eight-mile ride delayed him and Smith was dead on arrival.

There were men like Charles Hammond of Handkerchief Lightship who died in 1912. He made his first trip around Cape Horn at age 18 and was gone for two years. "He followed the sea until he was 40." In 1882 he was aboard the lightship, later to be transferred to Monomoy Light in 1889, then in 1898 to Chatham Light, "a stone's throw from his home." He resigned from the light owing to ill health.

In 1914, Captain Franklin Hamilton, who had served three years, was dead at 49. Keeper Shepherd, the next lord of the light, was given a surprise birthday party in 1919 at the Point.

How come so many suffered illness and worse out here? Lighthouse keepers must have felt an enormous responsibility for the men below on the sea roads waiting for guidance, a godly heaviness perhaps. At this pointed place, one of the first approaches for ships aiming to the United States, he perhaps felt even more pressure.

It seems, by the by, that light keeping was something many Moy inhabitants had done. The fleet-owning Loveland brothers' father Joseph had kept a light. Collins Howes, who owned property of which he had sold a fifth of the beach to Joseph Reed and Thomas Sparrow, had also kept the Chatham light. He had been fired by President Polk for some political reason or other. Trying in vain to get his job back, when the widow of one keeper was assigned there, townsmen such as Joshua Nickerson jumped to the widow's defense, for she had been doing an exemplary job.

Just some of the specks of history found about humans who served, their lives' contents largely unknown to the outside world.

Depression Camps

Some four-masted schooner freighters of the Palmer and Erikson fleets, some Provincetown whale schooners, would last through the Second War. Cape Cod Times's Peter Hartley reported that in the 1930s you could still see three and four masted schooners, "Mostly carrying lumber, bound down from Maine or Nova Scotia for New York, coming back up the coast in ballast. They would tack back and forth down toward Nantucket for hours waiting for a favorable wind and tide to make the Pollock Rip channel." These huge sailing cargo carriers, five masters and beyond, had caused some of the biggest wrecks of the era. But at least they didn't run on that great air and water polluter, coal. From 1912 to WW11, Main and South channels, between Pollock Rip and Butler's Hole, Nantucket and the Moy, were dredged to allow the huge cargo ships passage. Cribbing can still be

found in some areas.

For those who liked to escape from the land altogether, Monomoy in the Flapper period was still a sport-sailor's dream. Ted Frothingham, who wrote a booklet about small craft for his Harvard friends, and who was to die of cancer at an early age, had lived well until then: a Pied Piper of small craft, his regattas cruised both day and night along the Monomoy shoals' challenging waters. Hartley would report seeing sail fests and races on through the 1940s.

During the 1930s administration of President Franklin Roosevelt, 30 or 40 Depression camps were set up for women by the government around the Lighthouse. Some were pieced together out of old camps; some were brand new. While their husbands on the mainland were assigned to Work Projects such as those planting non-native Scots and red pine in Nickerson Park, wives would wait for their return on weekends. By the 1930s dust bowls not only affected the west, they were right here on the Cape. Drought in the plains states where farmers had superseded Indians had been in large part created by the man-made erosion from farming which had ruined the topsoil, and well-drilling which had desiccated the prairies' water tables in the soils below. Less porous soil, less water, meant a dryer climate above the area, meant more dust. On the Cape, a smaller but no less potent cycle of drought and erosion virtually destroyed the last of the forests and of the farmlands by the 1930s, until forced replanting reclaimed them. (The fresh waters of the Cape would never be as plenteous after the denuding of the soils which held the surface water.) The effects of financial fortune in its soiled coupling with the land would cycle up and surge underground again like a bad fire, to resurface.

At low tide, throughout the 1920s and '30s, the mail was reputedly delivered to the Moy by the Coast Guard in wood sided, balloon-tired (nine inches thick) motorized vehicles. The same kind of beach buggies would also deliver those vacationers and hunters who could afford to come down. The Coast Guard would pick up household needs for the families, as well as the supplies, ice and food they themselves needed "at the First National," delivering them when they returned from their daily runs. Hartley recalls one two-wheel drive 1937 International truck painted Coast Guard grey which did a good deal of the trudging. And then, as economic depression began slowly to lift, the barge brought, once again as before, tourist and local vacationers to the primitive comforts of the point.

Dana Eldridge tells a tragic story: In the 1930s, two of his parents' friends went out into the rips to fish in a dinghy. Swamped by the raucous waters at the southern tip of Monomoy, Point Rip, they signaled to shore for help with an oar. No one in the lifestation patrols saw them. His folks

took the old Ford towards them, getting a flat tire. Shortly, the dinghy was nowhere to be seen. (I had a similar experience fishing the Brewster flats. A tide surrounded me. I waved to a passing boat who thought I was saying hi. Thinking to strip, ditch my gear and swim for it, I finally followed a sand bar miles down the beach onto Dennis, and returned.)

I am shivering on a flat watching the tide come in and the shorebirds gather. Sand picks up and gusts, twists at me.

I recall an unexplained story that in 1936 a boot with a human bone in it was found.

Lifestations

Sometime after the USCG took her over, the Point was slightly remodeled into that almost tropical British look, dormered, nooks and crannies in the as yet hipped, red roof, only now with more nooks and crannies around its higher watch tower; all still covered in white clapboard.

Middle "Old" Station was refurbished after the Wadena wreck. Her half-way house, washed out by seas at Inward, along with a boat house or two, in the late 1930s, was photographed tilted into the waters, as the "Old Coast Guard Station sometime near 1940." In 1937 right before the washout: "The threatened closing of Monomoy Coastguard Station has drawn a strong protest from our selectmen in a letter addressed to (Congressman) Charles Gifford. The station has operated since 1873 and while its duties have changed considerably from those days, yet the selectmen felt its convenience to those living at Inward Point and to those who travel to the beach for the joy of an unusual trip was such as to justify its continued existence."(CHSN) Senator Henry Cabot Lodge supported retaining the place. Put on the inactive list instead, the Old Station faded into more disrepair in the 1940s, while its outbuildings stayed in use as official boathouses sporting at one time a surf boat, a truck, a dory. Its final fate was to blow down during the Korean war, after which its clapboards, roof shingles and other parts ended up scavenged for local camps.

1930s Ushers in a Precarious Age

Woodrow Wilson stated shortly before the First War: "We have changed our economic conditions absolutely, from top to bottom; and with our economic society, the organization of our life." He went on to say that "old political formulas...read like documents out of a forgotten age." These were dangerous words, as special interests which ignored the good intentions of Jefferson, Hamilton and the Constitution they had battled over forming, might, even after new limitations by government restriction, conflict with the "common man." The percentage of families living by the land dropped precipitously. As Economic Common Man parted entirely with what had

been a predominantly agrarian past, power could further concentrate in the hands of an Economic Oligarchy who controlled many of the basic needs of Economic Man, and who would within a few decades, in some cases, feel that secret armies should protect their "American" interests all over the globe.

More and more factory workers from rural communities switched off using the land for an edible or wearable commodity, to turning the land into secondary manufactured goods. Men now lived by the labor-hour; the factory work week which Henry Ford had perfected off his mill town predecessors, was now, increasingly, everyone's world. Oil, electricity, the automobile, the motor, the airplane, the wireless, the rising and engorging cities, had terminated the past.

The onshore changes of the 1900s gave year round Capers pause: writers such as Marion Crowell Ryder noted a place still relatively and happily self-reliant (in spite of the imports to the grocer from parts beyond) by dint of its craftsmen, its home gardens, beans for the pot, preserves boiled in kettles, corn dried in attics, its backyard poultry and orchards, and still some local dairying – as changed irrevocably by the time of the Great Depression. The work-for-money, the bought commodity, the indoor plumbing, the new refrigerator, the entertainment by radio and television made even Cape Codders, inside their rose-draped, sandy houses, a piece of the increasingly urbanized, job-dependent, economically overly interdependent, technologically puppetted world.

Ryder writing of a fishing community very like the Moy's said: "In the self-sustaining households of those days there was a solidarity and security. In these days of the deep freeze and the supermarket, fall means chiefly a season for cleaning the house, selecting winter clothes, and going off to view the autumn foliage. It is rather difficult for us to think back through the maze of conveniences we take for granted to the day when the harvest season literally determined the way the family would survive the winter."

The once relatively cosmopolitan Monomoier and Caper, brought in touch with broadening influences in the world via the oceans, from the Federalist era to the Civil War – for so many years an exporter of fish, an importer not just of cattle and timber from the south and west but of goods from foreign ports yet self-sustaining in such as turnips, onions and corn from the still viable soils of Eastham, had, after the Civil War, become ruralized, insular, forced back on his own devices just as he had been in the Revolution and through the War of 1812. Gradually, the railroad replaced shipping; while the Cape exported again some food, and copious amounts of cranberries, the local Caper still grew his own garden and was,

if no more a sea scavenger, a jack of all trades. Isolated again, in spite of that railroad with its tracks begun in the 1840s for the glass companies and finished in the 1880s, tourism might bring in sophisticated influences to Capers, who, less and less, visited far ports.

The isolation had made a pretty independent being of him, whether he was parochial or broad-minded, and the Monomoier might wonder, looking out at the still spacious, barren beauty of the Cape, what had been given up of independence, to an illusion of freedom. To early twentieth century Capers the precariousness of economic man, for all its benefits was perceived perhaps as this result then: We traded off, for technology or progress, Adventure, even as we landed ourselves firmly in a precipitously dependent existence in exchange for what we considered material "security."

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The World of the Skies: War and Sanctuary

As the camps on the Moy were accumulating again through the early part of the twentieth century, the awareness of the difficulties of the wildlife on Monomoy, as elsewhere, were evoking more and more concern. As we have stated, people had been protesting the "Brant killers" since 1923. From at least Henry Beston's accounts in the 1920s, as it would even through the 1960s, birds were still being slicked by tankers releasing sludge from their bilges. (Though laws limit this, it still goes on. Walk through any salt marsh and sniff your shoes afterwards. As well as big ship spills, oil leaks out from the motors of pleasure craft) Hospital Pond, at the southern tip of Inward Point, was so named according to several people who remember, for its propensity to shelter wounded and oiled birds, loons especially, which found their way into it.

From 1928 on, E.H. Forbush and A.C. Bent, two leading ornithologists important in the new conservation movements (and both still two of the most lucid writers on birds, even today), along with Congressman John McCormack and Senator Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., supported taking Monomoy for a sanctuary. In the 1930s, another father of ornithology, Ludlow Griscom (whose lilac- and rose-clad grey house at Chatham looks out past the sullen cloud strands of disconnecting sands to our Eden for birds), along with Justice Louis Brandeis, hopped on the lobbying team. In 1930 the board of trade called for a meeting to make Monomoy a sanctuary.

In 1931, "the Mass. legislature enabled the Migratory Bird Conservation Act, and then approved taking of Monomoy by the Federal government," according to a later article by Edward Sherman, conservation education director of the U.S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife (a descendant of John Alden, an officer in the recent war, with a brother who had been Chief of Naval Operations and had perhaps known my own grandfather), "It was given to the Migratory Bird Commission in 1940."

Chatham Historical Society, 1941: "Taking of Monomoy or the proposal to take it over for wasteland continues to be a sore subject." In 1942 the town of Chatham sued the government for one million dollars in damages

over lost revenue. “More than $30,000 are spent amongst merchants and innkeepers of the town by surfcasters who annually come to Monomoy during September and October to fish for striped bass. More than 2,500 summer visitors drove down to the “point” last summer.” Headlines boldly blazed: “Chatham Citizens Vigorously Opposed to Establishment of Bird Sanctuary on Monomoy Point.”

In 1939 war had begun in Europe. By 1942 the United States had entered it in the Pacific.

Though Monomoy was made an official National Wildlife Sanctuary in 1944, and although the US Fish and Wildlife was to maintain the preserve, it was to do so alongside the Navy and the Army Air Force. The place had been taken over from the Bird Commission by the US Government’s War Department by eminent domain in 1942, and quietly turned over to the military and the Coast Guard, as an outpost to guard this potential beachhead from enemy subs and ships. Bad enough condemned as “wasteland” for use by private citizens, ostensibly taken for use as a sanctuary, this was to many locals, the final duping.

War In The World Continues

Right before its stint as a serious military outpost in the 1940s, 20 to 30 families summered around the Coast Guard station, “in the strange collection of buildings that stood along the shore of the Powder Hole,” not to mention the additional comparable amount up at Inward.

By 1943, Monomoy became inhabited by the military. In the 1920s, special phones, as Henry Beston wrote, still connected all the life stations with their halfway stations to the lighthouses. During the Second World War, communications were improved. The copper wires which had been in use for the lifestations and lighthouses for over four decades were either upgraded or replaced with other systems. In 1943 a phone line went in from Provincetown to Monomoy, ostensibly for public use. That use was really for the military. In the same year on one patrol for German submarines a soldier shot at a sub with a long range but ineffective weapon. The unsubmerged ship shot back. A soldier found mysteriously dead may have resulted from this or another skirmish. One German submarine had even surfaced near the Stone Horse lightship when she was adrift in fog to ask through his megaphone in English, “Aren’t you off course?” before diving again. As a friend of mine likes to comment, the history of sunken U Boats off this coast is still a fairly secret one. (My grandfather was alleged to have busted German boats off Newport in World War One when he apparently worked for the Office of Naval Intelligence. His letters to my granny Esther Isaacson say he cannot tell her what he is doing.)

Passing into private hands, the nearby lighthouse had been bought in 1935 by Asa, and then George, Bearse, the first of whom had been one of its keepers and whose family was intimately involved with both Monomoy and the lighthouse until human habitation ceased. During the first year in which the isle was returned to the U.S. Government's War Department for the Coast Guard to man, the lighthouse was temporarily refurbished with various equipment and other new outbuildings plus a generator. It would be boarded up by 1943, the generator and equipment moved to the Coast Guard station. In the same year the old Piccadilly store was sold for a painter's studio which would not be used for a good while.

The Point station's main house was refurbished, changing little in form from the time it was first built: porch, three dormers, hip roof. It was kept repaired through the war and would function as the island's military headquarters, under the Coast Guard's jurisdiction. The watchtower was still in use. The roof was still painted red, the siding of clapboard, white.

Saltbox-shaped small outbuildings for equipment were added.

In the early 1940s, reporter Hartley recollected the Point as the only building left in Powder Hole with a working crew. They had a huge Bakelite radio, a noisy generator which was the only electricity on the island and was shut down at 8 o'clock every night in favor of kerosene lamps, a "big black coal stove" for cooking and winter heat. There was also a 36' to 38' picket boat which was to be on constant patrol for enemy subs, and a 14' dory. There were "skipper's quarters on the first floor, and a large dorm on the second under the hawk tower." The Stone Horse Lightship at Shovelful Shoals had a loud foghorn which could be heard at the station. Its noise kept him awake nights: "WUNK WUNK (pause) WEE-HOONK."

Gunnery

In June of 1944 we invaded Normandy. June 15 of 1944, Secretary of War Henry Stimson made the use of Monomoy publicly official by "pointing out an urgent need for Monomoy as a site for an air to ground gunnery and bombing range for Westover Field." Monomoy would thus become not just a naval and Coast Guard base but an Air Force air to ground target range, from 1944 to 1949, and beyond. For the most part the USCG and a few Navy and/or Army men were billeted on the island, there to make extra patrols over the area to secure it in wartime, while Army Air Corps men lived at Otis, made airplane gunning runs over U.S.C.G. terrain or perhaps came there by Jeep to use it as a ground firing range. (Whether the men at the Moy lived solely at the Coast Guard or at specially built outbuildings, or in pup tent encampments, or in commandeered civilian camps is unclear.)

Some people still can remember travelling down to the Point in war-time

by beach buggy. In the later part of the war years a ferry to Morris Island, then Jeeps, carried military and Coast Guard men to the Moy. During the core of the war, the camps were seldom visited by their owners. First, gas was on ration not just for cars but for boats. Second, even sailing there, it was not a pleasant place to visit – and there were many restrictions. As civilians left and the military came in, rivalries between branches made for near fatal mishaps. Men and ships had to move out of the way of projectiles. Bernie Webber in The Lifeboatman mentions being strafed by a smiling Air force man as a hazing. Webber, who was no wimp, wrote of the ghosts of the Lifestation as scary with the creaks and groans of dead surfmen. Norman Hill author of a book on the birds here, relates a story about birding the place with Ludlow Griscom during the war. An officious boy on military patrol stopped them every time they landed, until finally Griscom showed him I.D. from the O.S.S. as well as a letter from the Secretary of State of the United States. Harvard Professor Griscom himself was getting a bit of his own medicine; he had often been described as an "elitest," hazing birders accompanying him, especially women, with ornate Latin puns. One wonders how many clandestine meetings regarding this area's "strategic position on the Eastern Seaboard" took place here? How many ostensible ornithologists used their binoculars for something else?

Throughout the war years air to ground target practice went on while the Coast Guard looked for enemy subs and the Navy patrolled. A weird place then, perhaps like Falmouth's Crane Reservation now, where occasional missile parts may be found tucked into the shrubbery, warnings printed on them; rankled by a desolation of gunfire. Targets could still be eroding on the island for years after the war. I found a war-year quarter with its victory wings on it in sands under the lighthouse porch, protected by a rare kind of sea blight sprawling over it.

And as war continued with Holocausts of genocide, of nuclear bombs grieving the world with evil across the out of sight seas, one wonders if Monomoy ever had the incredibly spic and span, almost glamorous, not very private, comfortingly orderly redundancy of a regular military base. Or did its untamable wildness creep in to infect its inhabitants with the ethereal dreamy air and space of the place, the clean, spare sensuality of it which makes you want to live for life and love, just to eat and breathe and desire and create and live, essentially, simply, without any ordinary disciplines over you in a coordinated time frame.

We are lying back in the small boat, passing under the skies like sea beings. The clouds lurk close at hand, like big feathery birds. The skies lift us out beyond ourselves, into another dimension of being, like swimming in big

surfy seas with terracotta, soft, high melted dunes beyond. Two different elements of lifeway live side by side, one within the other: the interior freed, the exterior doing its tasks, waiting for the time off in which to walk and be. Time contracts like clay, expands again like a vessel of light and scent. Behind the dunes and the seas, cleansed, purified of civilization in spite of its urgencies, sharing the space and time with the free flying birds and the flapping flippered seals, the sleek swimming fish creatures, inhaling a kind of high of timelessness, amongst the self-diminishing stars, eternal (both tiny and large and singular and at one), history passes with its hierarchies played out in spirits upon the dune's stage (and its wars) back into the elementals, of sand, air, sea, sky, temperature. The human vileness stains the ground; paintings grow vivid and then fade like sunset; the conquests of the heart, the oblivion to human suffering, the perfume of desire's drug, material goods, dissipation, fade into a wolf light, where humans live like animals and air and plants again, in reality free, not merely free to exploit – but self-providing food, vision, enough; knowing honesty in love, amiability with all things. Into this peaceful reverie might intrude another world.

Darkness. Another darkness had come through, for even before the turn of the century, the brazen brightness of electricity and the noise of steam-engine powered boats, of automobiles with their motors, were beginning to tether us ineluctably to the age of technology – and by the 1920s to invade Monomoy, to make it a member of the modern world by the 1940s. Though the place was never electrified, the age of self-sufficiency was over; the age of quiet flame and sail was passing.

From the subtle light of candles to the diffusion of haloed glow by lanterns filled with whale oil, to flowered bulging porcelain "lady-like" kerosene lamps lit from petroleum discovered in 1859, to the brazen electricity, we were becoming stingy by exposure. By illuminating the corners of a cohesive, sheltered darkness which perhaps kept us generous, we would diminish the space which kept us wide, by lighting it too well. And by the noise of that light came the noise of strangers speaking words which by their abundance lose their meaning – constantly, through machines.

By the post-war boom of the 1940s writers complained there was no peace even on Monomoy anymore. Yet Monomoy was saved for an idyll and is silent again from civilization; except for ship-to-shore walkie talkies or the noise of motorboats. After the haunting of war and weapons, at last the area would be spared from unlimited intrusions of the auto, and even of the phonelines which had expanded in the 1950s for general use. It has been saved from further development. Now we may, if not actively participate in her nature as hunters, fishers, lifesavers, at least see something of her pre- (or perhaps I should say post-) technological glory.

The War of the Wings
Post War Refuge and Coast Guard

The Second World War was the one in which invention saved the world, and bravery raised itself back up again. It was the war which would decide much of a new generation upon ending future wars, having heard the tales of their parents. It was the time of invention, material progress which would leave a generation (for a time) weary of that as the sole panacea for human misery.

By the war's end, Monomoy had been used increasingly as a bombing range. After the war, many agitated to cease its use, even as the Army wanted to enlarge it as a gunnery and bombing target practice range. "On July 12, 1949, 2nd Lt. William M. King, 25, of Kenmore, N.Y., was piloting an F-84 Thunderjet (Ser. No. 47-1475) on a gunnery practice mission over Cape Cod, Massachusetts, when he crashed on Monomy Point…and was killed," according to the New York Times and New England Aviation History. Machine-gun practice, bombing, more crashes were seen as threats to fishing, fish, men and boats alike, and to aircraft caught in storms. 1949 September 3, Central Cape Press: "Hearing on Monomoy Bombing Range Brings Strong Objections From Residents of Chatham. 600 Notables and Residents Fill Community Building." Senators John Kennedy and Leverett Saltonstall (ex-governor), Congressman John McCormack, townsman Joshua Nickerson aligned with local citizens against the range. Broadsides and debates filled with wonderful public impassionedness the newspapers and the Town Halls. The Otis Air Force Base commander of the 33rd Fighter Unit, Colonel Aiken, guaranteed the range's safety at the debates saying, "These particular pilots are very vital to the security of our nation and in time of war must be prepared to do their job. The pilot must be able to hit his target and the only sure way to train these men in their job is to have practice bombing ranges. The present range is a two-mile area which will prove insufficient for the use of rockets, which too, are a vital defense weapon." (Welcome to the 20th century.) He proposed taking more area, 6500 yards to the west of what was presently used then.

But this time "National Security" was not a cry which would ring true.

Chairman of Chatham selectmen Edwin Eldredge spearheaded opposition against the Army Corps of Engineers and the 3rd Fighter Wing of the Army Air Force. He said something to the effect that: we felt the government took it as a bird sanctuary and recreation area, with protection to our shell fishing industry and now they want to make it into a permanent danger zone which deprives us of a million-dollar recreation center we have proposed. Joshua Nickerson spoke of how shells had

been discovered three miles beyond the target area. A Chatham attorney wondered how the place, already taken legally for a bird sanctuary, could be taken again for a bombing range after war.

The army claimed everything had been fixed and that no danger from ricochet, from planes flying at jet speeds 1000 feet over their targets, nor any danger of planes crashing into the dunes existed. They said the practice bombs of a 100-lb sheet metal container filled with sand, had a 3 lb. black powder charge in them to mark where they landed and were harmless. No-man's Land off the Elizabeth Islands was already in use by Navy and Coast Guard pilots, excluding the Army from using it. "The planes only carry 100 rounds of ammunition for each gun," Colonel Arthur Agan said. Popponesset, 21 nautical miles away, he reasoned, is the first land they reach; so if they held their hand on the trigger the whole time, no one would get hit. Thirteen Army Air Force men had been living at Monomoy during bombing runs, with 30 due to arrive.

Bombing practice continued. (Even today short haired, angry-faced right wingers pull a fit to tell you that they "only used flour bombs." It takes a long time for certain organizations to chill out about past controversies.) The Chatham Coast Guard station accommodated the personnel. By the mid-1950s most target practice was halted, but any designation as a protected area was delayed.

The place was finally to be returned to the Department of the Interior for a sanctuary, as it had been so declared in 1944. The government bought some sandy land. The rest was rented on a life tenancy similar to the National Seashore. Local voices, including Johsua Nickerson and Chatham town selectman Eldredge continued to spearhead opposition to its being taken for the birds. Eldredge published a long lyric in a local newspaper February 15, 1954. (I have the copy and date from Eleanor Henderson's file, but not the exact newspaper unfortunately.)

Aye, tear her wind-swept sand
dunes down!
Long have they held the sea,
And sheltered lonely fishermen
Who huddled in their lee!

For now machines are digging
holes
To help spend Government cash,
To entice birds to build their
nests

In man-made marsh and grass.
But unless appropriation goes
To help control the weather,
The birds won't nest by shifting
sands,
They know a darn sight better.

For years and years ten miles
of beach
We shared with feathered
neighbors.
This lonely strand a Heaven was
After Summer's labors.

Suddenly this all was changed
By a small delegation
Who called upon the Powers that
Be
In the administration.

To Cape Codders a notice went:
This is our property–
To come on this beach you now
must be
Of the bird watcher's society.

No more, no more to roam the
shore
As fathers did before us,
The eagle of the free, it seems,
Has chosen to ignore us.

Our land they took–our build-
ings, too
It doesn't make much sense.
We used to call it "stealing"
When there was no recompense.

Money we spend–year on year
So mosquitos won't invade us,
But from the ponds on Monomoy

They send their hordes to raid
us.

If from your door you hear a roar
That sounds like a torpedo,
Back! Back! my friend, for it
may be
A subsidized mosquito.

To our complaints they turn deaf
ears.
To put it in their words:
"Monomoy, for now at least,
Is Strictly for the Birds."

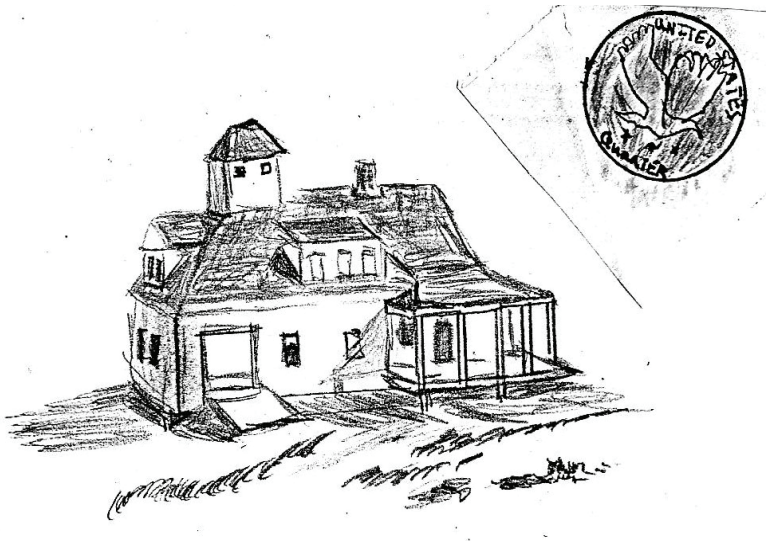
Nonetheless, the government won out again: From 1957 to 1962, the first Refuge Manager, Arthur Pelletier, worked out of a small headquarters in an outbuilding of the Coast Guard's, on Monomoy itself. (Some sources say that bombing was not entirely stopped until 1959.) Refuge headquarters were removed to the refurbished Morris Island Lifestation on July 1st of 1962, not a moment too soon. "Helping Mr. Pelletier in his work of regulating the use of the refuge has been the wind and the tide," a reporter commented with irony. Still ¾ to ½ mile wide, "Vicious winter storms with accompanying high tides, cut a path through the island in 1959. Since then, the break in the island has deepened and it is now 20 to 25 feet deep along one bank. Now, during extreme tides, almost 1/3 of the refuge disappears under the waves." (Tucker, Standard Times, April 22, 1962.)

The headquarters on Morris Island in the old USCG lifestation was almost the twin of the one, which, except for a concrete piling or two, lived once near Point Rip. It should be noted, that as of this writing in April of 2024, the Refuge HQ and Visitor Center is engulfed by erosion and being torn down. A new locale is being sought. No more available from here are the wonderful views out to the Moys, and the great walks down the stairs to Morris Islands flats and dunes.

In 1966 it was still debated as to whether to finalize into law the Monomoy Island National Wildlife Refuge within the National Wilderness Protection System. The executive committee of the Cape Cod Planning and Economic Development Commission in December 28 of that year voted unanimously to do so.

Called so since 1944, finally in 1967, Monomoy Wilderness was placed officially and for keeps under the jurisdiction of the United States Bureau

of the Interior's Department of Fish and Wildlife as a National Wildlife Refuge. This upgraded the kind of protection from that of a protected area to an untouchable one. (Until the next war?)



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Ends

In 1949 or so, the Point Lifestation had been remodeled, the big barn-like structure painted white again, new dormers added. The tower (said by some to be useful for secret romance) had its height drastically reduced. The station's functions would be replaced by radar and radio. Salt and sand weathered buildings to rubble in forty years or so. In fact, for a while the Coast Guard allowed men on Monomoy duty to wear beards to keep the same elements from discomforting their faces, USCG historian Seaman Dan Moreau told me, laughing quietly. Through the early 1950s a skeleton Coast Guard crew was kept on for communications, rather than for outright rescues. But at least one famous rescue did occur nearby.

Last Rescues from the Moy

Feb.18, 1952 about a mile to the northeast of Monomoy, on its way around Pollock Rip towards Boston, the military tanker Pendleton broke in half in 60-foot seas. Earlier that day another tanker the SS. Fort Mercer had also broken in half and 38 men had been saved, out of 43. In Seaman Moreau et al's account, published by the Coast Guard in 1989, the motor lifeboat began to cross Chatham Bar out of the Chatham lifestation in blinding snow with only a compass to guide her to the second wreck of the day, the Pendleton. USCG Captain Bernie Webber, who headed the rescue team, author of *The Lifeboatmen*, like Mayo and others before them ever since the 1800s, would receive a gold Medal of Valor from the U.S. government for his bravery. Only nine men were lost, 32 remained alive. The Pendleton wreck bones could be seen off the east of the island until 1979 when they became a shipping hazard and were blown apart by the USCG. *(See Mike Tougias and Casey Sherman's book,* The Finest Hours*. I was an extra in the movie so I could write an article about it which the producing company would not let me publish!)*

Did rescue ever lose its romance and become just a kind of ambulance driver job, human beings and their plight replaced by the metallic equipment used to save and doctor them? If the former lifestations had

the naval, the nautical feeling of a ships' crew, it was more like a fishing vessel's, a wooden schooner. Now the feel was more like a submarine on land. If the lifestations were placed on a high knoll, where like lighthouses today the big cross and diamond of a ship-like mast could fly the black and red, black and white signals of stress and storm, soon instruments could carry on for eyes and bodies. *Antiseptic shipshape white quarters, almost like a hospital, snug and tight, reducing the wild scented sea airs to that white-sheeted smell on a cruise ship; the men in their uniforms who delivered the mail, official, legal, in the law, as it were, did they respond to the place beyond the sterile white of their bunkroom walls?* As Beston describes them up the spit at Eastham's Coast Guard beach, yes. As Bernie Webber, one of them for years, describes it; yes and double yes, aware of the Monomoy ghosts, hearing footsteps in the wind on a lonely watch; enjoying illicit romance in the hawk's nest of the lookout turret. Men like Webber remember skinning and selling muskrats to Sears for $1.50 each; rainwater bucket laundry; wild Air Force parties, a cocker spaniel named Milton who lived better here chasing foxes than "tied up at home," with an occasional pat on the head. (A good metaphor for many of us in civilization.) Cloistered in the camp of their snug, brave, brotherhood; men like Seaman Moreau, interested in the local history, courteous, became quietly in love with the familiar local intricate waters.

Civilians

The summer vacation, affordable to the few in the late 1800s, had become a popular thing before the Second War, increasingly popular in the 1950s. As the phenomenon of suburbs grew, the summer home was all the rage. The Cape began to thrive on real estate sold for these sojourns. Places like Monomoy attracted the summer residents as playgrounds. What was denied you in your everyday life now, inside at desks in cities, could be recaptured for a time at the second place, provided you could afford to pay for the place and time. Nature was becoming ever more and more a marketed commodity, an entertainment, an escape. Now as we had escaped from nature in our Puritan past, we would escape to it in as unreal a way: protected from participation in the elements, we could pick and choose our seasons. We could play at nature and with nature.

By the 1950s, camps began to be patched up and reused around Inward, around the abandoned life station. Some civilian sojourns on Monomoy may have had a dusky military secrecy, when, during the Korean War, the place may even have been used to pass messages regarding the heating cold war. One source speaks of a dangerous meeting taking place in the barren and private dunes, sometime in the 1950s.

Dana Eldridge talks about the close-knit group of civilians on the Moy, of friends and families up at Inward. He says camps were a mix of things like an old hot dog stand, a duck blind, a chicken house, many covered with shingles scavenged from such old buildings as those which blew down at Middle Station. He reminisces fondly about the non-material, about otherwise tough men baking apple pies for everyone; about what seems to have been a kind of low-keyed continuous party. People visited, traded fresh water for pies; ate. Told tales. Fished. Ate. Sailed.

Articles about the past such as one by Eric Radack in the Cape Cod Compass recall drinking, cooking, washing clothes, sponge bathing, in occasionally brackish, sometimes sweet, water drawn from wells; a sense of freedom unlike anything on land, or even sea. People remember Powder Hole again becoming too shallow for anything but dories. Remember a dory ride to Morris Island; then a Jeep over the bridge in 1949 down to the Coast Guard station. (Getting there is half the fun, an adventure in itself.) Powder Hole salty; fishing for bass off the beach; clamming.

Serious, boyish eye surgeons smile about childhood space enough to hide behind the dunes; recall lying in the hot sun, getting tanned, swimming, catching toads; the best time of their youths. Perhaps something in the lazy beauty there led them into a later generosity in life.

Between the ages of two and 15, my friend Al Stello, a former Army Ranger, and his family, parents and two siblings, used to go down to Monomoy. They had a cabin there with a wooden walkway to the Poirier cabin near to Powder Hole. He says they were just like family and always in one another's cabin and kitchen. Al has great memories of his father making spaghetti from scratch. He said his English mother was a fabulous baker, making her own chocolate, making chocolate cakes and eclairs. They'd always have a snack from her baking when they came home from school. And his father would take hours to make pasta sauce which they would have with his homemade pasta when home from church. He also made ravioli; you could only eat two they were so much, so big, and filled with ricotta and the right amount of basil. One time the kids (his brothers and sisters) put the pasta down the hand pump well and it came up spaghetti when dad pumped it and they all laughed. He said there was a boat which transported Jeep with its very wide white wall tires to a ramp on which it drove to get onto the island. His dad would drive him through the dunes and around the place in the Jeep. He recalls being very young, saying, "this is mine!" There were great fishermen out there he said. (Some were his relatives who fished professionally). They didn't use spinner reels. They used big old wooden/bamboo rods with big reels. They caught a lot of striped bass. The clams were not in mud but in sand and there was nothing like them for sweet taste. Their shells were white. They swam at

Powder Hole and wandered through the old, abandoned Coast Guard station. He would walk from Powder Hole up island and he says you wouldn't think anything of the walk though it was a long one because it was so beautiful. So many birds. The last time they went was in 1969.

And now, just the remnants of the Craft Camp at Inward, and one other last privately used shack with a propane stove and fridge and broken windows, gazing at the stained glass of the shallow Hole.

Oh, can I live their lives for an instant, the lives of the generations before me out of which I came, now that the time is falling down, like the shacks, passing back out of view and into the sands?

And always the weather. In the 1950s, the sound fills with arctic-like shelves of ice. Low tides pull up the clams, high tides push the shorebirds to the highest knolls, twitching, picking under their wings, preening, fluffing, looking. Low tides reveal items washed up.

Death of the Point

The Point with its outbuildings, used as a sanctuary and refuge headquarters since 1957, was to be put to the stick in 1964. "Monomoy Area Razing Begins," after a protest by a Captain Nord Gilbertson who said that "buildings should be preserved as navigational assistance to the inexperienced boater and fisherman whose instruments may have become inoperative."

Standard Times, Nov. 8, 1964: "With the cooperation of the United States Coast Guard, which aided in the transportation of heavy equipment onto the island, and the United States Navy which handled the demolition exercises, the Fish and Wildlife Service has razed two of the three buildings of the former Coast Guard station at the south end of the island and has removed and buried old beach buggies to construct artificial nesting areas for young ducklings." In 1964, debris was removed from Coast Guard outbuildings. They kept the garage as an outbuilding for the Fish and Wildlife.

Soon the outbuildings would be finished off in a fire. Some concrete pilings of one of the station's units still can be seen.

As the place was left for the odd realm of birds, American troops in Vietnam's surreal war intensified. *Shadows of lanterns in strange fog are huge as seven of yourself. I have seen it myself, what Beston and Thoreau describe on Nauset, here on Monomoy.* What archetypes there, what treasures do they conceal, the ancestors, in their pasts?

Refuge: Afterlight Is Gegenschein

And the light, unelectrified and often unused since the Flapper age? Until after the war, the lighthouse would remain boarded up, occasionally

strafed by Air Force slugs. By the 1950s, the lighthouse once again passed to private hands, to Wat Small and Howland Jones, whose forebear was Asa Jones. They, as Mrs. (descendant) Jones reported to me, found it difficult to maintain; spending summers repainting instead of enjoying.

In the 1960s, those 22 camps of the 1930s and '40s revival had dwindled around the Hole and Inward to 12. Still remaining privately owned around the light was about four acres. In 1962, Fish and Wildlife cancelled the remaining camp leases where they could do so. A few remained grandfathered from 1944, for use until the last tenants died. In 1964, the Massachusetts Audubon Society bought the lighthouse and two acres around it to use for pesticide study, bird banding, etc. Two acres remained in camps, until their cancelled leases were to be up or the occupants passed away. It's been alleged that a cabin or two were burnt down by the Feds without telling the families they were taken by eminent domain. In his 2015 book, *Remembering Monomoy*, Fred Craft said his family let Fish and Wildlife burn down their camp at Inward Point in 1991.

The lighthouse continued to prove a hazard, difficult to maintain. Eventually, Mass Audubon returned it to the Department of the Interior to own and to supervise. Monomoy Point Light Station and keeper's house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places Nov. 1, 1979.

In 1988, the two-story house with red tower was diligently refurbished as an environmental center for the wilderness area. But not until after some disillusioning infighting.

Pure motives restored the building which had peeled and been boarded up. Anything but pure motives assigned it in contract to a provincial nature organization which uses the public lighthouse to make private money, none of which is ever returned to the public for its benefit. The lighthouse itself was not even open to the public for free or even a small fee. You could see its inside only through the organization holding the contract, and that costs a good deal of piggy bank money.

Overnight stays were discontinued in 2009 as the lighthouse came under the purview of US Fish and Wildlife.

Now, after the restoration bird banders stay at the red tower of the lighthouse and its keeper's cottage, near saltwort, coast blight, bayberry, purple gerardia, juniper, and cattail wetlands. Solar panels provide some electricity for recharging phones. There's a propane fridge. The rooms in the cottage are sparse: cots with sleeping bags, a table, a few chairs. Most of the time is spent outdoors. (see Roscoe, Cape Cod Times, Strictly for the Birds, Sept. 1, 2018)

And At Last

In the 1990s, along with the expensively accessed lighthouse and island is the last structure. The Craft camp at Inward, once owned by blind fiddler Lonnie Gold, according to Eric Radack, finally disappeared in Hurricane Bob and the Halloween gale of a few years past. Does the sound of one camp prevail after the fact? Does violin music draft out sunset into other tones?

The Golden Age, when, as World War Two veteran Edwin Taylor, one of those privileged to enjoy Monomoy in the 1930s noted, "you could drive to it, fish it, hunt on it," is no more. Taylor hunted on the last November of 1945, when he had just returned from overseas. He hunted with a friend of his while rumor had it that the Bureau of Sports Fisheries which would become the Department of the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife after the war – (even as technically the U.S. Army Air Corps/Army Air Force would become the US Air Force after the war) – said no hunting was allowed. But Vernon Eldredge contacted legal assistance, who said the War Department had not formally released the place to Interior. And so, the last duck hunt proceeded. Jan. 1, 1946, there would be no more duck hunting. But then, as Taylor adds, protection for the place had to be, or with the increase in numbers, it would have been "overwhelmed".

For a time one private permit dating back to 1944 remained at the Hole: The last shy, now pretty trashy shack was used once in a while by a few evangelical elders of the Poirier family until the deaths of the righteous occupants, when the grandfathered tenancies all reverted to ma nature and pa government. For many years they had paid about $2.50 a year for their permits. Supposedly the Sacred Heart stood over the door, to save the place. Yet all I ever saw in there was a sacrament of the scatological. Often those who claim the greatest good, know in their hearts that it is, in fact, the greatest evil which lasts the longest.

New Age Environments

Now in the New Reconstruction (of natural zones, before we may have to use them again for real, for survival in a new dark age) everything from deer to plovers and terns are protected (the latter with an elaborate series of signs and forbidden zones); gulls are radio tagged, ducks censused and sexed by Refuge managers, nesting boxes set out; some recreational uses allowed for humans. Sporadic, solitary clammers hoe for spitting, cutting steamers on the flats, bent over (finding long ribbon worms or an occasional razor clam), or offshore on foot or from small craft, rake under thin waters in high waders to put quahogs in their nets. Fishing boats troll and chum, motor and hum. Ornithologists census migrating shorebird

populations at Godwit bar and elsewhere, deliberately stranded in their blinds at high tides, make photographs. On both islands, terns are banded, censused and protected as it is one of the "remaining viable habitats," for common and roseate terns.

As the Cape Cod Chronicle reports, "the refuge remains the largest common tern colony on the eastern seaboard."

That less than a quarter mile to North Island could seem miles and miles away boating out to it through circuitous safer routes on the "Chatham Road" past the metal buoys and markers. We pass strands of sand which look like stratus cloud wisps dropped into sea, colloquially named "Mini-Moy" where, in August or September, thousands of terns, in particular Roseates, will stage for their return to South America. My sun-allergic, red-blonde friend will count the shorebird populations, a permanent image for me in his knee-high green boots, jeans, red jacket under his yellow slicker; jacket-hood over his baseball cap; over six goodhearted feet standing up to pole his dory into the motorboat. When we first get into it at Chatham, he will tell me how the passerine numbers he has counted on the islands for Manomet Bird Observatory and as a former long-time regional editor of American Birds magazine have dwindled over the past two decades; but that tens of thousands of shorebirds still pass in fall, fewer in spring; that perhaps hundreds of thousands of puddle ducks maintaining their high counts and perhaps in some species increasing, still pass through in fall as well as spring. Here Forbush himself rejoiced that terns were reestablishing themselves at the century's turn after plumers had raided them, and snowy egrets, almost to extinction, for feathers for ladies' hats. Their populations rise and fall now according to the voraciousness of reestablished gulls.

Here some of the conservation movement itself began.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife, others, come and go with their nature technicians, special boats and tours. Massachusetts Audubon Wellfleet Bay Sanctuary gives tours here, and other organizations had participated in the use of the lighthouse, as stated, through the courtesy of the U.S. government's National Wildlife Refuge at Morris Island. There is also a ferry service. Or, if you are so privileged, go out by friend's boat, by kayak, by canoe or small sail craft, rather than paying a price to share a piece of the place with eager strangers. Even if the buildings are closed, you can contact the Refuge Manager for rules, regulations, permits. The advantage to a naturalist-lead tour is that you can begin to learn what birds are which, and which vegetation is which, if you so desire. Be careful to stay out of areas posted with signs beyond which there are nesting terns or piping plovers. (Can the birds read the signs?) The longer trip to South Island

will yield you perhaps a bit more freedom and more wild habitats but it is harder to find a tour-less way to get there, and much more expensive by tour than is North Island.

A face looks at me wistfully from behind a dune, a shadowy leaf-colored face. It wonders: we may come here to view, but no longer do we participate in the seasonal processes of this wondrous place, nor, for most of us, in those of any other.

Monomoy belongs now to the world of biologists and eco-tourists. Though we no longer participate in the different world, the other communities of more natural men, of fishermen, hunters and sail craft, we may, if we can pay for the trip, or know someone with a boat, partake in a limited way in some of the place's winged delights; we can absorb the sandy endurance of a place which is living, unstable as the proverbial flame in the wind; eternal.

Ironies

Monomoy's "strategic position on the Eastern Seaboard" for migrations was indeed a strategic position and still is, for any vessels or incoming missiles in a new war. Illogically, I used to look out from Morris Island at it in the distance and think of it as a secret preserve to boat to if the Cape were invaded by something terrible, a place from which to start life again and from which to view below the patterns of our mistakes.

The patterns of the late 20th century as emblems of both Military Power and Environmental Concern arose were both intensely mirrored here. Surreally so. The connection between military and sanctuary was a strange one which could continue through the years. Even as late as 1994, a live practice bomb from decades ago was found on Monomoy and turned in to the Chatham Coast Guard. In other places created from old military reserves, but not here, there were poisons under the well-conserved flora which the birds and animals for the moment seemed to ignore. The conservation movement was itself largely born out of conquest. While the forces of war ally with economic forces to ruin lands, an army of dedicated humans try to save them. Areas such as Monomoy, which had been taken by the Army, had been preserved from development. When their military purpose was through, they could be used for sanctuaries. Perhaps it was a hopeful sign that the very aggression which had caused so much of the world's expansionism along with the destruction of its human and wildlife had found itself in a new noble role of another kind of protector.

By the 20th century, we had shrunk the world and fought over it. Wearying of our destruction, humans looked around to see that we were destroying other creatures of the planet with our devices.

Even as wars had and were being waged over the resources of power, geopolitical position in the globe, we looked about and saw the scraps of land were growing fewer. We called "Stop."

Refuges were created, stopping places for creatures; places where progress stopped. But we need to go further than eco-art and eco-tourism. We use up earth, spit out wastes. While we save lands, human artifacts and human numbers continue to lap at the edges of the island, like an ocean eroding the edges.

We have, in sanctuary, mixed blessings: we have, by our competition's misuses, endangered creatures. Now we will not allow them to compete in the world dangerously out of skew we have created. We must manage the world we have distorted by our over-competition with earth and man alike. If we break in order that we may mend, we have neither goodness nor Nature, but Control.

Unselfconscious wildness exists then, perhaps only when the flat sea rebels, when pyramids come up fluid with white and winsome wrath to make us watch in fear. The cliche that the wildness does not need us is false. It needs us to be responsible to it. Because our manipulation of the world has come so far as to leave us all beached upon the wrack line of chaos, or of conscious and beautiful choice, the very plovers, terns, raptors which the wildlife technicians tend, band, census and protect would suffer without our protection.

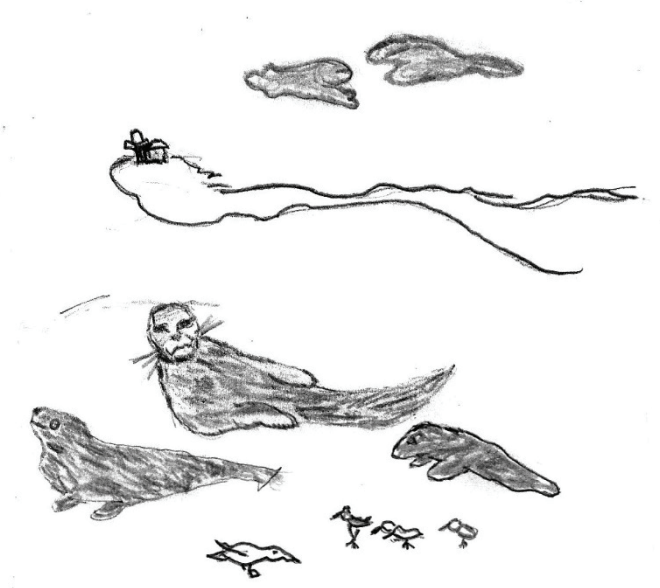
Wilderness needs us. Anyone who has really spent time in the outdoors, camping, walking, knows that creatures came to know you, send out vibes of missing you when you have left a hole in their continuity. The earth (wilderness or otherwise) may suffer a terrible loneliness when we have vanished. We must be responsible to it in order to be responsible. (And the humans? What sanctuary is there for those who need it the most, for those cast out, too poor to buy the day's peace?)

Refrain:

The swells of sea, the swells of land here mirror it, copy the sea. (Emerson said patterns in nature are limited yet repeat endlessly.) Winter, pussy willow colored, cold and colorless leaves. Then comes the summer warmer with grassy weavings, sheltering; inviting me to frustration if I do not return to freckled, bare eggshell Monomoy to cleanse off all of human living. What have I missed, what tissue of my inner self, when I do not go? What colloquy with whose heart? From places on Monomoy you can't see the sea, though it is right there. The dunes form a kind of bowl – yet with the waves rising up, the place becomes a kind of cradle. What will be left in the morning? What cast out, what recovered? What will be alive or dead? As yet she has her

occasional revenge – to overtake and remand.

I inhale the dry guano scent of gulls, listen to their limitless whines. Sound of that, of the sea, of the sands in the winds, becomes part of the incessancy of summer and its heat. I am become the isle.



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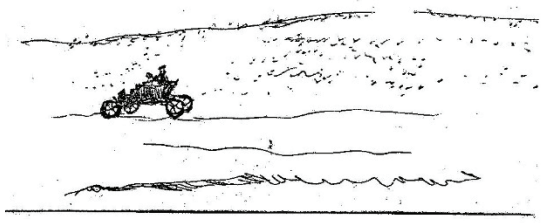
Postlogue



On a warm, rainy day in the 1990s, I finish this work. How many dreaming images flood me, as if the ghosts of the past with their world in time insist on being seen and seen again. If I were on Monomoy, the rain would be somehow wetter than ashore, just as everything is more out there, theatrical, heightened.

On the mainland

my spirit has travelled back to stay at the Lighthouse, to explore. The lips of sands stretch in front of me to the west, expanding. Behind me the dunes hold me close.

From the dazzle of day of August, it turns stony. There is a sublime quiet of spaciousness as I prepare to rest under the stars.

The dusk of the year comes, the days shorten. August brings fall. In the morning, lost in the light, what delights will I discover of birds, of wreck bones, of wash ups, of deer, of sky, a sky divided into huge shafts, a sky designed by the elementals?

From the lighthouse looking west, I survey an expanse of bubbled sands and grasses, a wide hastening of land.

I seek to see the history in black and white, like an old documentary. The quiet is supple with the intimacy of peace; but there is storm under the surface. Under the bent curved ribs of a *wetu* I sleep at the north. I see other round homes, bent saplings, warm and alight like jack-o-lanterns. In the center a conical cedar and skin structure of a shaman's shaking hut

which Champlain will draw on the mainland; vapor steams out of it; fish hangs out to dry. We will be leaving soon. The runs of fish have passed with the warmth. Cold is scolding.

I see my house change to a heavy timbered farm; staying in one place, there are wheels and cutting and carrying and selling stacked produce.

Comes the tavern and its huge beams. Here are soggy the marshlands. There, the wrecks and wreck huts when the world was of the North Atlantic.

At the south, the world begins to expand. There is the iron loneliness of the lighthouse discovering torn ships, and soon the liveliness of a fishing village. I see the light white, small, close, boat-like cottages. I see sails and a kerosene beacon flashing its rainbows from cut glass.

I dream of a Village disappearing around the time of the Civil War both in population and in houses, transported by panels on barges back to land.

Then, flying back from the green and tanned south to the pale north, the hunters on the brown flats stoop and aim for black scoters crooking their elbow-like wings, landing by the thousands. Shotgun fire alarms the cool still dawn. I hear the smack of bullets. And then, nothing but birds, and the occasional boat.

Out there near me, the shatter of airplane gunfire. The odd surreal time. And now, the velvet closeness of dream and loneliness.

Chalky men bend and hoe the past, perhaps smelling a lost perfume of freedom in the wind.

Can see the scruffy kitchen gardens, the cows, the salted cod, the masts of schooners passing; squeaking, hear the dockings of catboats. Early morning, a dry day; ready to set weirs, cast lines, set lobster traps. There, the Spartan interior of a lifesaving station; a lighthouse keeper polishing up this glass. Visiting. Wifeless men perhaps with crushes on the lady of the light. Men with beacon fires luring ships in stormy night while others slept, fearful with rocking oceans.

Can watch the people going to the shore to scavenge for spars and beams for their fireplaces, so they would not have to pay the high prices to the "aristocrats of firewood," taking building materials off packets and barges, digging up bog peat from inshore areas for fuel, taking it out to the isle, melting bayberries for candles. (Cut out of crystal: boat wedges, lights of harbors, then- a slur of fog.)

See the mess and clutter of a slightly unsavory village attempting the forlorn niceties of civilization; hear tales drifting through the smoky men by the fireplace of the boarding house; see the storm and rescuers in their skiff, the steady and fixed beacon of a white light in fog, refracting it, chiseling flaked implements of light out across the obsidian chipped waves. Frosted in winter, arctic.

History is a litany. So is nature.

I see each niche produce its own, in interconnecting spirals. Like history itself: personal, local, national – so the land is ordered. The dunes present their corsages of white beach plum and shocking pink rose. The wetlands seep bronze with golden rushes, sedges cattails, reeds. The marsh is shaded with greens down to the most intense of the lowest areas. In the pannes the next zone is a spectrum's band of sea lavender, lilac smoke, with ruby fingers of glasswort in fall. Swirls of pattern, a common sense: tidal flats for the clams and the eating birds; dunes for the goldenrod, dusty miller, muskrats, gulls; flat sands for the terns; wrack line near the water for the running Piping plovers. Salt marsh hay for pasture in the middle by the acre; pothole pond and thick brush for deer; for ducks, for hunters; for wildlife biologists: The poetry of simple, mundane, seasonal order.

Questions haunt: Did the feral cats and foxes which ate up gulls at the beginning of the twentieth century threaten the delicate birds? Had men plundered Great Auks in fact here in the 1600s? Did men come out here to "egg" as Nova Scotians did until laws on the books as early as the late 1800s locally, began to protect them? And the War Years, what besides a gunnery was here, what secret missions? Was this a sought-after beach head by the Germans? And sanctuary, what happens to a land kept in stasis by decree?

I think of how the sand and weathers cycle, and so too, do the people. (So too) do the animals and the plants. The names repeat even as the migratory seasons do: those who lived here then, those who lived here even before.

What kind of people were here?

The World of Men on the Isle

"Modest," daring, shrewd men like grizzle-bearded salvager, carpenter Captain Elmer Mayo (who could look the romantic in one photo and the privateer in another). He would marry Brant Club proprietor Alonzo Nye's widow Priscilla Bassett, who, when people called for Mayo, would respond, "Oh, you mean the Hero?" Many relatives: Bearse, Kendrick, Gould, Eldredge, Nye, Doane at the Brant shanties, at Lifestations, at Lighthouses. Somebody had a sense of humor to name sons George/ Washington Bearse. Another son, Fernando (which hero, he?) was a lifestation substitute at Morris Island's station. He was the father of my source, Eleanor Henderson, whose uncle George's great great grand-pa was the aforementioned David. The family was descended from vessel

masters. These were vital, good looking, clannish Cape Cod Yankees, whose names dated back to the European colonization of this place; brand new, just a few generations. Shrewd men there were, such as light keeper and landowner David Bearse, who, when he thought Reed and Sparrow were "coining it," upped their lease after it ran out in 1847, from $75 to $500 a year, only to be outsmarted as they bought one-fifth of the Monomoy Beach from Collins Howes. Howes was he who had kept the light, run a store on Monomoy, followed by one on Harding's Beach in 1874, and himself had "followed the sea" for 14 years. He was sold a pew in a Dennis meeting house, which by his funds, he had helped to repair.

In 1830-40, through part of the Jackson presidency, anti-Masonic parties grew up, at first defying what had been felt to be an aristocratic, elitest, preserve of founding fathers. This "nativist" party wanted to keep all nationalities out but first comers. Masons came back at them stronger than ever. On the Cape, man's quest for spiritual control had begun with religious revivals in the 1830s when local Temperance movements took all rum off of packet boats for a time and placed Bibles in Humane Huts. Increased sectarianism created a "hysteria" as Thoreau called it, which culminated in the Camp movements of the 1880s, laid low for a time, resurfaced in Prohibition, and returned to full flower a century later. Men like Howes, along with men like long time lifestation and lighthouse keeper Joseph Hardy and other Monomoy locals, were St. Martin's Lodge Masons.

There were men like Timothy Loveland, fleet owner, who had been involved with the fish and the mercantile business from 1848-63; after his bout with the weirs, he became a bank president. Brother Isaac stayed with the fishing fleet business from 1848 until 1866. He had two wives, one of whom died; creating six kids, one who would be an early Prohibitionist. They were the sons of a salter, who, as mentioned, also had kept a lighthouse.

There were men like Captain Kelley of the Point Station, who refused a Congressional Medal of Honor for a valorous rescue, saying it was all in the line of his work. (In fact, more than one lifeman refused it, saying it was his duty; what a broad-backed breed.) Kelley was tough, placing a rescued crew under the thwarts of a lifeboat, he said, that "they would foul the men at the oars" if they stood up, and threatened to shoot them if they did. Or so J.A. Nickerson reports. There were tough visitors too – ship captains from out of state who would not let their crew back on board when they had (fearing they would go down) jumped to safety on board a schooner which had rammed them.

Here were good looking brunette women in sweater hats and coats,

like the one shown with the seven good-looking men of Hezekiah Doane's lifesaving crew outside a Moy shanty in an undated picture after the turn of the last century. Doane would captain the Old Harbor Station (moved now to Race Point, Provincetown) built after the Orcutt disaster as an adjunct to the Chatham and Moy stations. Captain Doane is looking at her, smiling, handsome. Was this the woman he would marry: Peninah Pierce, niece of Peninah Bassett, wife of George Bearse, sister possibly of Priscilla? I picture Doane and the woman, setting up camp. Washing laundry in the rainwater, in big bins. Maybe there was a handpump for freshwater too, or a small freshwater hole might open up. Or you could carry water down here, up from a pond to water a garden, too brackish and fecal from ducks to do much else with. Preparing for a long stay. Camping out. Camping out inside the shanty. Maybe they had a bigger, nicer house in town, more rooms, more luxuries. But it was spare here, "bare to the bone," stripped down to the joyful challenge of essentials. You had to rely on your dexterousness, inventiveness.

Humans had been here who had to endure the violent potential of the sea and of her offspring, gale; layers of sometimes interminable spooky quiet; then the rattlings of spirits of the sea-dead in dark mildewed musty eaves; the prairie-like exposure to sky and continuous space. *Did the colloquy of neighbors invade, or had they hopefully developed a reserve to honor a "public privacy?" Inwardness. Or did the space of sea and sky itself give people an inner sense of privacy, what actors call a fourth wall, even as they lived near each other?*

And were they provincial? A Harwich Historical Commission memoir by Kate Baker Chase (of the ship building Chases of that town) written in 1873 speaks of her sea-life, voyaging on ships her father commanded. She sailed with pets which all met "tragic ends," played her piano aboard in commodious quarters. She went to exotic ports such as Rangoon, met the people there, watched the trading. Sailors of lesser degree of command nonetheless returned with firsthand experiences of other cultures, not divorced from the experience by the intermediary of television, although perhaps as encapsulated by the class or race prejudices of their times as we are by the tube. If they were not encompassed by those preconceptions, perhaps they were broadened, made tolerant and more alive.

Ultimately, photographs of Brant Club men somehow embody the burly spirit of the spit: Bowler hats, vests, slickers, mittens, beards, shotguns; lobster buoys, nets, shanties; men who looked like deliberate outlaws, who

had a good sense of humor, enjoyed a good pipeful, enjoyed each other's company. Their relatives and friends were photographed at the life station in white, windy, appearing as if danger were a pleasure; all living a good permanent distance from urban worries. "Called upon Reed, Loveland, Thacher and all rest at Inn. Scarcely recognized old acquaintances in their rough garb and sunburned faces – were cordial and hospitable as ever and began to think that wasted of being sympathetic with their banishment from civilization. They were to be envied for their jovial life and health giving pursuits." (Here were enemies who had made friends when life was simpler and more like a party at camp.)

Here were New Englander people who had learned to use the town debate as a means of sticking up for their rights. Protesting Brant Club ownership of Shooter's Island in 1923; protesting the place's use as a gunnery range in the late 1940s; agitating for new coast guard stations; protesting use of the place as a sanctuary from the 1930s through the 60s. Barrenness made "men to eat their hearts," Thoreau had observed of this area.

The dearth of fuel wood, the eroding lands, the economic depression which followed the Civil War, scarcity, may have made people desperate, and as Bernard Shaw said, when you are starving, you don't have time for morals. Cape men were a kind of odd liberal conservative, adverse to change but moderately tolerant of it anyway. A wily place made wily people. Litigious over land since their arrival, brave at sea, mildly larcenous; beyond the law in certain matters. Feisty. Life and adventure loving at the last.

From the limpid light of marsh and of sea, over the thin land, populations of many but thankfully not all of the original inhabitants had changed to English farmers and whalers and soldiers, fishers, captains and global entrepreneurs, becoming "Americans." Cape Verdean and Azorean men had filtered in, to whale and fish, to grow strawberries. Irish and Finnish and Portuguese fishermen had come. In the 1940s, the simple life of Capers was made worldly again by war's influx of soldiers. Then were the summer vacationers, tourism, eco-tourism.

These people of Monomoy too, were people, like those of much of the Cape, of many different ethnic antecedents, some perhaps mixing with the original stock of surviving Wampanoag, who shared bravery in common, and were pummeled by the narrow exigencies of survival into being Cape Codders or Monomoians. Men who were "physically capable of manning the pumps all night, or jettisoning fifty tons of ice or paving stones, not to mention mending sail and spars." (Indeed, every ethnic group was represented by the lifesavers of the past; brave men with broad backs know no bounds of race or religion.)

At last, the area engulfed them with her natural demands, and changed them. On Monomoy, now, who could live as they had, in the exposure of winds? Amongst the birds, fishing, gardening in the sands. Without the details which we now consider as essential?

There are still, for a time, the handsome faces in paper photographs of the past. A current descendant of English colonists has the leonine classic features of his forebears. You can see the shadows of what made him, like a linked set of different designs of the same: There are ancestors by the oxen in the golden pasture; on a three-masted merchant vessel passing the shoals as the first refuge "wigwam" went up; in a saving dory, or in a camp, falling in love, bringing a bride, bringing a family to sportfish... creating the next human stamped and designed by time.

Can he feel them change, by the ocean, by the marsh hay pasture? These novels, these reinterpretations, rehearsals, shadows, repetitions are the experiments of eras.

Poetic Purview

I walk down the beach to the new fish house. The catches of mackerel are going there. The herring's fast-sold as bait to fishermen headed to Cape Ann; loaded into dinghies taken aboard. Pogy is shipped in smacks to Boston.

I walk up the dunes slanting from sun into dusky shadow behind the lighthouse. Then snug in polished rooms of the more temperate area of the Lighthouse, inside there in the winter, a keeper, his wife. Friends invited in, maybe just the lifesaving men. Fishermen's stew. The Foghorn. Beyond, treelessness; something without shelter; a few places to hide. A land below me which only people who could withstand exposure for long periods of time could take. Inside there in the winter, a keeper and his wife with their bric-a-brac from the mainland stacked against the whitewashed walls.

The offshore berths in a blackness of night on the sea, with only far lanterns to guide you rock up and down as a liquid seaweed scent or a kind of clanging guides the captain.

Walking north now up the beach up into the cold: the Rescue Station; a stove, six or eight lonely men; clean wood walls, spare beds. Fishermen's stew from quahogs and mussels, lobster of the island – cooked in a clambake under the sands with wide ribbons of sea lettuce, grass green vivid, or with tobacco brown kelp. Clam pie, supposed to be so good that lobster would seem tame by comparison. Vegetables and meat, a treat brought in by boat.

Later around the stove at the lifehouse, the refuge, what umbilical would connect you to help in the encompassment of storms, before industrialism? Just like the colonials, you and the danger; the camaraderie of success when you had saved that vessel and could see her out of the blackness now.

In the age of sail; cut off from the land, if there was a "wrack," you wanted to go out into the cold hard slap of weather to save men, or to raid for the remnants when other people would want to listen to the wind and tuck themselves into bed, listen to the wind and curl closer to the fire inside. This isle could feel like a ship, protected and dry or damp, about to cast away.

Here on the North, Inward Point where cabins washed into the sea in 1941, it is somehow colder up here, looking down the plains to a regal and mystic snow owl.

Before technology, before screens with images connected us to everything – more self-reliant. More provincial, perhaps, but closer knit; less intrusion of outside information, less of a superficial connection to events... A pause here before it whisked us away into discrete parcels, compartments, for the "Natural, Historical, Recreational." Self-reliance yielding to commercial endeavor.

Trying to reconstruct what it was like to be on the island before the inventions warred on isolation by communicating instantly with the rest of the world. The ease, the slowness. The daring it took to go to sea, to do the everyday actions of life in fact, the adventure. How cut off were the Monomoy lands in the Dark Ages before Electricity, the phone and radio, the television, the computer. (Even here attached by a wire there could be a virginity of place, here a peace and quiet.)

This was the age when Distance was not cut short by communication over long space and time. The danger itself created an intimacy. This was a safer time, paradoxically, more secure; less able to be violated by the ravages of egos inserted into the desperation of dwindling resources for both body and heart.

Can see sails and winter-colored, boney faced landmen becoming a corporate tribe of fishers, venturing out past the glossy leaves to the bare sea-edge, carrying fish and corn in a small schooner down the coast; in a dawn-leaving fishing vessel jigging for cod under pink flashing skies; at the bank onshore capitalizing their clan's ventures.

And there is the man before them, waiting, patiently, amused as only endurance can amuse you; waiting to take me home.

Smells change. Having your picture taken when you come to camp at the end of August; dry, a perfume of pine wood in the cabin. As the fall progresses: a musty scent of familiar mildew. As the winter comes: the scent of smoke. As the early spring comes: the decaying rankness of tidal flats; then uplifting dryness and must mixing, summer bayberry and roses, a drug curing unhappiness, the hot tidal salt and seaweed, and again the ant-dry scent of wood, the fresh cleansed scents of frail curtains at the open windows.

I lie at peace in the hot sun reflected by the sand, the fir-like, hand-long scraggles of recumbent sea blight in front of the lighthouse porch. I picture a Monomoyick hunter bringing me clams and venison to bake with my corn. I can relax. I know there will be enough for my babies. We will move back to the mainland when the cold comes.

Entertaining yourselves. Yarns by the fire. Family. Friends. Cooperativeness.

I remember the quiet I knew as a child on the Cape. You could lie down almost anywhere and feel away from the world. But now the insertions of publicness are everywhere. There is little sense of isolation consolation here.

Trying to remember not so long ago, into my own childhood, before we slipped away so quickly from the unelectrified closeness of camp, into a sea of images from afar; strangers, television, news; pressure of the increasing voices of hungry humans, of my own hunger.

Trying to remember how to be private, intimate, brave and easy.

I can see a man and a woman playing in the dunes, hiding in the lighthouse for shelter from instant rains; can see the faces: high boned tribesmen, fall-colored; able at war, at peace, at provision, supply adaptable to what the earth, weathers, seasons demanded. Can sense deer in the fog and light stepping free natives. Angry inhabitants killing horses which trampled their cornfield; can hear the taverns which colonials so needed as entertainment; the clank of horses, the pewter soft with flame, the scent of mildewed heavy hewn timbers.

Hear now, asleep, worried gulls. A refuge then for safety, not only of animals and plants and winged things (the swallows which wrap their nest of glued mud around the front door, topping it off with a proud lace of white feathers for the four warm eggs) but wherein resides the safety of our souls.

I can forget the problems of human suffering, the mute shouting of a land abused, here. Even now a plane passes over me, drowning out the sea.

I cannot forget the problems of human suffering, the mute shouting of a land abused, here. I can only wonder how we created our history, and what we have lost to progress which we may never regain.

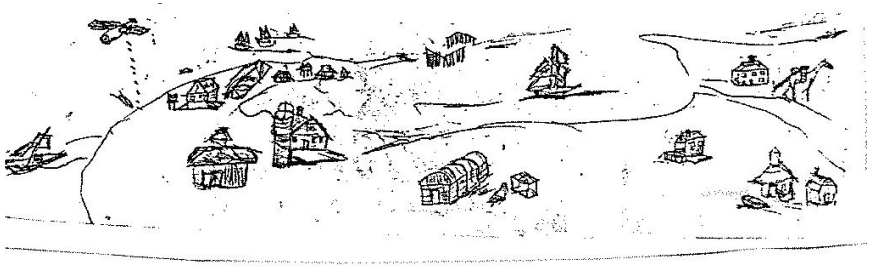
History as Nature

Here the place, its resources, its placement made its entwinement with, its uses by, man, predetermined within certain limited possibilities. Populations of humans rose and fell, bringing or leaving their implements, according to the runs of fish, the openness of harbors.

Because of the inevitable actions of violent air and waters, wind and rising seas on glacial crumble, Monomoy created itself, enlarging, breaking, diminishing, engorging. Its very prominence into the ocean would attract Indians looking for fish and whales. Sticking out like a sore thumb it would inevitably be discoverable by Europeans. Its location would create lethal rips and currents which in turn would make humans react with lighthouses, lightships, lifestations. Its distance from the mainland made it desirable for both early pirates and later military operations alike. Its exposure made it vulnerable to attack, desirable as a beachhead.

Actions on its body created its organs (habitats) and those determined its uses by animals and man. Because of its birds, it would be hunted. Because of its flats, clammed. Its salt marshes would assure that horses and other kine would pasture there and that debates over salt hay rights in the era of first settlement would result. Because of proximity to fish-filled banks, there would be fishermen and fish flakes for drying and salting their catch. Because of its tidal creek nurseries there would be nearshore fisheries, weirs, and overfishing. While its harbors made it livable, there would be a settlement. When the harbor closed in, when the place was diminished by erosion and by storm, people would leave, whilst clams and birds and fish and grass would stay, enticing humans to return. When people no longer made sufficient livings from nature, because of its beauty, there would be vacationers; there would be proponents of sanctuary. Monomoy: a drama of cultural process within a natural matrix, fragile, sturdy, threatened, saved

This place is in constant motion, with sands, seas and weathers harrying it. Birds cling to skies above it, skitter along flats. Clams suck through sand holes. The kind of people who like it here love the privacy of a last stronghold, loved the challenge of living and surviving on a kind of buffeted ship. Houses and ships and men and women come and go, material artifacts change, creeks and promontories change names, maps are redrawn, history rewritten.



The ocean remains.

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NATURE, a Literal Look

"Monomoy Wilderness is the only federally designated Wilderness Area in Southern New England." (https://www.fws.gov/refuge/monomoy/about-us)

At this writing in the 2020s South Monomoy is about six miles long and less than a mile and a half across at the widest southern tip. North island is less than a mile and a half long and less than a mile across. Together at the moment they stretch about eight miles off of Morris Island at Chatham, which with the island pieces comprise Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, the largest wilderness area in Massachusetts. (There is also, notably a sand strip adjacent to the islands where terns stage to migrate and seals haul out, known to locals as Minimoy.)

The masses of migrating shorebirds on North Island, ducks of South Island pothole ponds, hundreds of migrating birds of all kinds, the healthy plethora

of horseshoe crabs so diminished elsewhere, and whose eggs feed migrating shorebirds, the hordes of gray seals hauled out here, the thousands of reintroduced Northeastern Beach tiger beetles, not to mention shellfish galore, and offshore fishes, dolphins, whales and sharks make the two Monomoys as breathtaking as this sentence.

It is wonderful to be with such an exhilaration of beings beyond human packed into and around this barrier set of isles.

Conservation Army

The strange alliance I have mentioned which exists between military and sanctuary continued on Monomoy. After Arthur Pelletier, 32-year-old Harold O'Connor, served as Refuge Manager from 1957 to 1962. Prior to this job he had performed as a military intelligence special agent. Refuge Manager O'Connor stated in 1964 that, "Man, who slaughtered the wildlife during the early history of our nation, nature, which destroyed vast numbers of waterfowl during the droughts of the 1930s, and an uninformed public, which lacked knowledge of wildlife, their living habits and habitats, all joined to contribute to the decline of various species." Like chalk on a blackboard, land and species were being erased. Like ink pressed out by an official seal and blotter, species were dying from living blood and tissue into paper recollections. The warden went on to state, "It was through education of our people that many varieties of wildlife have been preserved that were earlier being threatened by extinction."

Managers still must combine that odd dualism of military-sanctuary; carrying a weapon or sidearm: "Don't call it a gun." They behave like policemen one day, biologists and bird-banders the next, construction and maintenance persons the next, hosts or hostesses the next. Managers have included an escapee from a prominent publishing family, a basketball-playing expert moose and caribou and bear hunter, and a pistol-packing female or two. (That was in the 1980s to 1990s. I confess I have not known recent refuge managers, though current one as of 2024, Richard Nye, has been very helpful in corralling information for me.) Although the USCG helps the US Fish and Wildlife here in emergencies such as lost children roaming about, the refuge managers are usually on their own in their responsibility for the islands' property and wildlife. They have, in return, the exciting perks of an island occasionally all to themselves, the televised discovery of gray seals, a randy and very fast government boat, plus the secrets of where the bluefish run best.

In 1964, 1500 acres of barrier beach and island in preservation held salt and freshwater marsh, even as today. Not only were tidewater gates installed to control the flooding of freshwater areas, and millet and rye grasses planted to entice birds to 30 nesting areas then constructed, but tractors and explosives

manufactured their new pothole ponds.

The two refuges comprised 2700 acres in the 1990s and now in 2023 about 3,500 for the wilderness itself with the whole refuge including Morris Island comprising 7,921 acres.*

*Like so much with Monomoy this is embroiled in conflict. The town of Chatham and the state of Massachusetts disputed the acreage and boundaries of the western edge of the refuge, which the Monomoy NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan of 2016 (CCP) claimed, saying its underwater resources at Nantucket sound had been under local management for fish and shellfish and that the 2016 management plan laid claim to about 3,000 too many acres.

The NWR reached a compromise with the town and the state in a Memo of Understanding signed in 2021, "Both Parties agree that, while this MOU is in effect, commercial and recreational fisheries, specifically clams, oysters, and scallops, will continue to be administered by the Town consistent with past practices and as evaluated in the CCP. Both parties agree that all activities on lands within the western bounds of the Declaration of Taking which lie above Mean Low Water are not part of this MOU… Both Parties agree to meet annually, and as needed, to share information and discuss joint fisheries management issues." But the refuge reports, "it is important to note that the only commercial shell fishing activity allowed within the refuge boundary is below Mean Low Water because nearly all areas of the Refuge which are above MLW are part of the designated Monomoy Wilderness." The shell fishing must be hand processed and there is no harvest of mussels, nor of horseshoe crabs, the latter two important resources for sea ducks and shorebirds respectively. Commercial and sport fishing also remain in place around the refuge.

Conservation Efforts

Predator control was initiated pretty much since the beginning of the refuge. Red foxes were eliminated. Trapped and slain were the last racoons which came to the island when they were hinged to the mainland and each other. (These still come and go depending on the status of attachment.) Muskrats who threatened elegantly delicate tern eggs were dished. (Killing the foxes, killing the racoons, killing the minks, killing the...)

Conservation efforts continue to protect species include piping plovers, some species of terns and ducks, horseshoe crabs, certain beetles, and more – with banding, censusing, nest building, sexing, to understand and thus to encourage certain species under threat to breed here, as well as to protect migrating, nesting and wintering birds, animals, insects.

Birds

In the 1960s there were about 270 species of migrating birds. Some say perhaps as many as 350 species dropped down to about 250 by the late 1960s.

In 1966, one source lists 300 species of Monomoy birds, with as many as 35 shorebird varieties. From the 1980s and 90s with about 230 noted as habitual, but the count of bird rare and uncommon as well as common rise to as high as 285 and beyond including very rare accidentals until the count for the last version of the check list in 2001 is 350 plus. monomoy birds (fws.gov)

In Birds of Massachusetts (1993), Peterson and Veit summed it up, "Monomoy is one of the most spectacular migratory stopover areas in Massachusetts (because of) the large numbers of migratory shorebirds that feed on the flats at the north end, the migrating passerines that periodically accumulate around the ponds and thickets at the south end, and the history of nesting gulls and terns on both islands."

Nestlings

A number of species have been recorded nesting here: ducks, herons, geese, as well as passerine songbirds including the rare seaside sparrow, along with Horned larks, chickadees, swallows, cowbird, grackle, finches, jays, whippoorwill (possibly), and downy woodpecker. Owls, great horned and short eared; hawks such as harriers, and, of course, terns and gulls breed here. Black skimmers, American oystercatcher, piping plover, Sora rail, herons, egrets, glossy ibis, have been recorded as well. Nesting shorebirds have included willets (declining in recent years), least and spotted sandpipers, and rarities such as the Wilson's phalarope. Those short tailed, mouse-like birds, the sora and Virginia rails, have also been known to breed in wetlands here. (See Monomoy NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan, 2016, (CCP) and its Appendix A. Species Known or Suspected.)

Gulls and Terns

As noted, terns were decimated by market hunting in the 19th century. Numbers of common terns for example, may have descended from hundreds of thousands to only a few thousand. In a 1927 Massachusetts Department of Agriculture edition, E.H. Forbush, never himself sure whether terns were depredated on Monomoy or not, wrote that in the early 1900s with special protection, terns "continue to breed on the new land which constantly makes up at the end of Monomoy Point. This land is entirely bare of vegetation for its first year or so after its emergence from the sea." (Plus ca change.) He says that when vegetation grows which conceal prowlers, the terns move on to bare turf again, whilst the new plants gave berths for savannah sparrow, horned larks, snow buntings. (Same today.) (An editor's note to Forbush says that protection was dropped after the early 1920s on Monomoy, and the terns left. What protection is unclear.)

Tern numbers peaked in the 1920s, in the case of the common tern to 30,000 pairs. By the 1950s, tern numbers which had increased suddenly dropped again

due to rising gull populations. And yet, by the 1980s, terns of all species had their numbers go up. This meant maybe 10,000 common tern pairs existed in Massachusetts, maybe half as many least and roseate terns. Some comparable numbers are gleaned for Long and Gardiner's Islands and a few other east coast areas.

On Monomoy(s) common terns in the 1990s did a marginal job of reproducing from about 500 pairs and fewer. Some roseates had settled in, courting in the most tender fashion to mate, increasing from none to 100 pairs. Roseates and commons breeding at the South in the 1980s did so in the 1990s precariously at the North. But the gulls they escape at the bottom are waiting for them at the top. Some of my favorites, the least terns, raved and hovered in over 100 pairs on South Island in the 1980s. But these were gone by 1991. In 1992, they moved onto South Beach. (Sharon Ware. P.C.) Most of Monomoy's terns then also preferred to go next door to South Beach.

The lipstick-red beaked Arctic tern will also occasionally nest in amongst the roseates and commons in pairs fewer than your hand's fingers. Monomoy is the southernmost edge of their breeding range.

By 1994 less than 100 pairs of various brands of terns nested all over Monomoy in May, but the numbers increased by June to 100 pair on North Island, 200 pair on South alone, which dwindled to about 200 pairs nesting. Summer of 1994 spotted a score or more of young Common terns hovering over the mirage of marsh fog, juveniles returning with the adults. There was little fledging success for commons. Roseates and leasts were scarce and had no breeding success; from Monomoy at least, none of the capless, smudgy juveniles accompanied their parents back to Guyana and parts south.

Other terns which do not nest here pass by on occasion, Forster's, black, Caspian, and even royal, after hurricanes. The black skimmer, a tern relative which looks a little like an oystercatcher, bred on Monomoy in 1990, and off and on before that about seven times in the past two or three decades. Gulls and terns, the Laridae, are cousins. Herring and black-backed gull relatives, the laughing gulls, with their black heads in a mafioso look, uttering weird, chuckling sounds, colonized here in the 1970s. A few years ago, as many as 20 pairs haunted the place. In the summer of 1994, they weren't around. By 2019, 3659 pairs nested at South Monomoy, the only site in Massachusetts – where they compete with roseate terns.

The Tern/ Gull Conflict

In the 1990s there is trouble between the terns, piping plovers and the gulls.

Open garbage dumps onshore, offal from ships, have allowed once-threatened gull numbers to increase. About 20,000 pairs of herring and black-backed gulls breed and overtake the terns on Monomoy alone, swarming about both blocks

of sand. These outcompete terns for nest sites, arriving earlier on territory, behaving with aggression to the terns, whose eggs and chicks they will also eat. Ants, rats, mice, black crowned night herons, foxes and owls of various brands, minks, muskrats and snakes, take bird eggs and chicks. Terns threaten their own procreative efforts when they practice a phenomenon especially prevalent on Monomoy called "night desertion." Taking off for waters unknown at dusk, nervous terns leave their eggs unbrooded, unprotected.

Needless to mention, human disturbance is a tern problem. Tern guarding, placing square metal signs with strings between them, is diligent, with wardens to accompany the signs. Humans can be limited by signs, but the other creatures refuse to read them. Gull predation also occurs on piping plovers, oystercatcher and short eared owl eggs and chicklets.

As far as the gull problem goes, various solutions were discussed: Technicians consider setting out "proven harmless nontoxic" poisons for the gulls, the overpopulating "sky rats" which once themselves were encouraged to make a comeback from dwindling numbers. Wardens slept in blinds with lanterns attached to their rifles to hammer gulls with buck shot in primal fits of un-Ph.D.-like pique. I recall an amusing story of gulls who recognized biologists coming to shoot them. After the second disembarkation, they rose up barking, to fly off even before the boat hit the island. Unlike tigers, gulls are not fooled by humans wearing animal masks either; a pretty smart bird, it is seldom in fact "gulled" or "gullible," as it once may have been.

Then, in order to better protect terns, federally endangered roseates in particular, as well as federally endangered piping plovers, Monomoy became a flash point for national wildlife management policies in 1996 when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service poisoned between 3,000 and 6,000 black-backed and herring gulls on South Monomoy Island with approval from Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife, and with help from the U.S. Department of Agriculture which issued the permit to use the avicide DRC 1339, Avitrol, a starlicide. This poison is a form of plasticizer used in paints, and as such does not break down but merely dilutes in water. It may be mutagenic. It is manufactured by a division of Ralston Purina and is restricted in use by California and Missouri (where it is manufactured) according to an independent study done by Dr. Glenn Elion of the Department of Defense.

Avitrol's manufacturer stated that misuse can produce fatalities in all vertebrates. 4-aminopyridine, another form of the toxicant, has a warning from the Georgia EPA: "do not apply near water." The Environmental Defense Fund rates Avitrol variants as "more hazardous than most chemicals in 3 out of 3 ranking systems…This is a high-volume chemical with production exceeding 1 million pounds annually in the U.S." which "lacks at least some

of the national data required for safety assessment." The Environmental Defense Fund scorecard ranked it between 50 and 75 percent for "toxicity and persistence." Their Ecological and Integrated Environment rankings for danger are well above 50 percent, all the way to nearly 100 percent. Cornell University's Department of Natural Resources reported that, "Avitrol is a highly toxic, restricted-use avicide that causes birds to produce vocal and physical distress signs that scare other flock members."

Earth First activist Peter Souza initiated a community protest which was joined by people from all over the Cape. Animal rehabilitation workers picking dying gulls out of Chatham ponds where they had flown to try to relieve themselves of the constricting thirst which avicide-induced uremia caused them, said they had never seen animals die such an uncomfortable death. The sounds coming out of the birds were pathetic. Dorothy Cheechi-O'Brien, Barbara Birdsey of Orenda Wildlife Trust, and Cape Codders for Wildlife Protection (a group formed by the late activist, Patricia Lambert because of the gull protests) were instrumental in gaining attention from Senator Ted Kennedy's office. While animal rights activists were a part of the protest, many people with no ties to that movement (in fact several them were hunters and fishermen) were simply concerned with the possibility of toxins getting into the food chain and ground water. With Cape Cod aquifers susceptible to pollutants, and with offshore fishing grounds also vulnerable, Cape people objected to any use of poison which had the slightest chance of entering the permeable environment and its food chain.

A honcho of USFW threatened the group of protesters that if we came onto the island while they were conducting poisoning during the weekend, to protest, they would arrest us as eco terrorists and we would be in jail through the weekend, at least for three days. An FBI agent was noticeable, and I talked to him, saying he should be on our side; we were just middle-class people protecting our local environment and wildlife. He seemed to listen.

To many, I vocally among them, the poisoning of gulls for the sake of piping plovers and roseate and other terns seemed to be a manipulation of nature rather than good management. While the protection of endangered species for wildlife agencies is a mandate written into law, and certainly a concern applauded by all the protestors, it seemed to many that Monomoy was not the right staging area for saving them; that the larger picture of total numbers of endangered terns and piping plovers in all their grounds on the east coast should be considered.

The extremely endangered "pipers" were at eleven pairs in 1955, five pairs in 1985 with five young fledged. 1980s-1990s numbers varied but pairs usually remained about a baker's dozen. In 1994 7 pair fledged 1.5 chicks. Not too bad. Four hundred ninety breeding pairs of plovers were in Massachusetts as

of 1997 as compared to about 131 pairs in 1985. There were about 1,161 pairs counted for the whole Atlantic coast in 1998.

Roseate terns for the Atlantic coast showed 1,743 breeding pairs by 1997, not much improvement over 1,600 pairs in 1978. Historically roseate terns had never done that well on the Monomoys where they had not only humans and feral animals to deal with in the past, but also the first over washing of approaching storms on their nests. And as for piping plovers–why struggle with raising numbers of them on Monomoy when plovers were doing well right next door on South Beach – (in 1998 there were 35 nesting pairs there) – and numbers had begun to increase on the Cape Cod National Seashore beaches.

Dr. Ian Nisbet, one of the foremost world experts on roseate terns and Dr. Paul Cavanaugh concluded that the problem of gull numbers could be solved by capping Cape Cod landfills. Cavanaugh noted that gull populations had already declined on Monomoy from approximately 15,000-20,000 pairs of herring gulls in the 1980s to less than 7,000 in 1995, with a drop in black backs from 8,000 pairs to a couple of hundred less due to the "capping of landfills and the decrease of commercial fishing." In 1997 Nisbet and the Center for Coastal Studies made a report recommending that the state and federal agencies more closely monitor the effectiveness of their own procedures for gull reduction. (The two considered the refuge's management plan and execution less than satisfactory.)

In 1997, protests continued to try to ensure that no gulls would be poisoned. Congressman William Delahunt and the Humane Society of the United States added their support. At a meeting at Cape Cod Community College, the announcement was made to applause that avicide use would be halted indefinitely.

In 1998, Senator Ted Kennedy and Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt met at Chatham Bars Inn for a town meeting with a couple of hundred representatives of the community as well as state and federal agency spokesmen and National Audubon's coastal seabird expert, Steve Kress, who was given a $30,000 grant from USF&W to research regional populations of terns and plovers ("as a reward" for his support of the federal gull poisoning plan, one authority said). In a room overlooking the ocean, in front of a roaring fire, the debate cordially went on between the two sides, both behaving in a polite and considerate manner. The upshot was reassurance that gull poisoning would not resume for the coming season, that review of the management plan would be initiated. Instead of poisoning gulls, a northerly section of South Island would be reserved for a gull harassment policy of shooting, live trapping, nest destroying and otherwise harassing gulls.

Years later, a 2009 USGS report found that gull removal did not affect plover population. (It is exclosures surrounding nests and eggs which help raise

plover populations.) Interestingly, in 2008 a USFW report stated, "Mercury was detected at 0.14 ppm and 0.11 ppm in roseate tern and common tern egg samples from Monomoy NWR, respectively… At Monomoy NWR, Total PCB concentrations in common tern and roseate tern composite egg samples were 0.671 and 1.126 µg/g fresh wet weight, respectively." So, it may not just be predation affecting roseate numbers.

Removal of gull nests and eggs continued on behalf of the terns, sanctioned by the Monomoy NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) of 2016. "Lethal removal of gulls when there's evidence of individual gulls predating tern eggs and chicks during the tern nesting season" is practiced, Refuge Manager Richard Nye emailed to me in 2023. The Plan and its appendix lists other methods, including shooting, destroying nests and eggs, and harassing various gull species. Herbicides and proscribed fire clear vegetation to create nesting habitat. "Tern camp" is staffed by interns to vigilantly check nests.

In 2021, Massachusetts piping plover numbers were 967 pairs. A total of 1,017 chicks were reported fledged with about 40 breeding pairs on Monomoy. Also, in 2021, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) counted 38 pair on South Monomoy, with eight fledged, and two pairs on North Monomoy with two chicks fledged. The Refuge reports that "the beaches of Monomoy and Chatham have the highest concentration of nesting piping plovers in New England." The plover count for 2022 on Monomoy according to the Refuge was also 40 pairs.

Tern numbers in July of 2019 were celebrated on Facebook: "It's official! The count is finally in! Our annual tern census was conducted on June 8th and 9th! We counted 13,472 common tern nests and 3,272 laughing gull nests. This is an increase in both species from 11,723 and 2,746 pairs, respectively."

In 2019 MassWildlife reported 400 pairs of least terns on South Island with "poor productivity," e.g. few or no fledged birds (though in all of the state, "Least Terns increased 23% to the second-highest number of pairs on record.") There were no roseates in the north, 12 pair in South Monomoy with 9 fledged.

USFW reported in 2022: "The refuge…supports the largest nesting colony of common terns on the Atlantic seaboard, exceeding 17,000 pairs." (Their bold.)

Refuge Manager Richard Nye reported to me by email that as of 2022: 18,360 pairs of nesting common terns, 595 nesting least terns in 4 different colonies, 22 pairs of nesting roseate terns with 16 chicks fledged. No arctic terns were observed nesting on Monomoy in 2022. MassWildlife reports, "Of Massachusetts' four nesting tern species, the Common Tern, Least Tern, and Arctic Tern are listed as 'Special Concern' pursuant to the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act. The Roseate Tern is listed as 'Endangered' pursuant to both the Massachusetts and U.S. Endangered Species Acts."

Bio Sanctified

Monomoy, it should be underlined, is a crucial area for counting bird populations to designate seasonal maxima and minima. (I recall how many wonderful hours I spent accompanying one master bird census taker, watching, as he counted the lumps of minutia on wings, as a few other famed birders have dedicatedly done, through raw salty cold, iron gusts, season after season, to have some accounting of the mysterious lives of these creatures' adventures.) I think of all the incredible bird proctors, protectors and mavens such as USFW's Kate Iaquinto, Manomet Bird Observatory founder Brian Harrington, and so many others.

All in all, biologists have been heroes of protection and restoration, especially on Monomoy. But there are caveats.

The problem with being a nature professional, says a local birder, is that you have to "remember what to hate." Biologists who red-dye the breasts of and radio tag foolish looking gulls, tracking them with their t-antennas, grow attached to their subjects, do not want to see them shot or poisoned; would rather eliminate the dump sites which feed them. And this is the decision recommended by study which has ultimately won favor.

To be sure, the new priests, the biologists, can save a species. The not too bright piping plovers with their bundles of just hatched, wing-hidden fluffs of wrack line babes, can be protected by exclosures, helped to live safely, to couple. "Let's give the pipers a staircase to their rubber tires this year," biologists joke to confused outsiders. Ornithologists, splay-legged over their scopes can count populations, decipher the leg-bands' colored codes on endangered birds, to later determine their fluxes over time periods of many years. (To their frustration, the computerized numbers in many cases are still detached from the determinants of what I call resource-reactiveness: those limiting factors of weather, of available food, of all the circumstances which contribute to adaptation – and then to evolution.) Some of this is self-consciously, headily Positive stuff, guaranteed to make you "feel good about yourself." But some, assured of their righteousness when they save the endangered, feel they are justified when they decide that owl, fox, solitary weasel should die for threatening the Protected and Preferred. The sad thing is, we have gone so far to break nature's bones, we now have no choice but manipulate those bones back into position, congratulating ourselves all the while.

While biotechnicians can cure, they can also screw up. Monomoy has its own coded lore amongst her participating naturalists, such as the story of the guilty shooting of a rare martin, progne sp. to make sure that it was in fact the bird. These kinds of mistakes are seldom. But there are other problems with the beatification which accompanies the doing of good works: Naturalist-guides can increase your awareness of an endangered species or a whole habitat's

precarious place in the world. Perhaps they will motivate you to activate something in favor of the diversity, both cultural and natural, on the earth; perhaps the experience will simply let you learn more about a given area. Or perhaps, you will feel that you are part of an insider's club: those who are the new members of a new, concerned elite. Another religious revival. Beware, or you may carry the baggage of ego which caused so many problems in the first place, back into the wilderness and its new Eden.

More Numbers of Other Birds

Shorebirds

Tens of thousands of shorebirds pass on the Atlantic Flyway, heading south in fall, numbers increased from fledged chicks. Somewhat fewer hordes head north in spring. This is because they use more fly routes to travel north than to return to parts of South America, the Caribbean, Puerto Rico and as far as Tierra del Fuego. The refuge's conservation plan states, "The Cape Cod region of Massachusetts protrudes into the Atlantic Ocean, attracting southbound shorebirds following a more easterly path." There are a number of stops for migratory birds along the flyway but two of the more important on the eastern seaboard are Delaware/Chesapeake Bay and Monomoy. On Monomoy, as elsewhere, shorebird passage continues through the summer, because well before the fall, the post-breeding turnaround from the Arctic may start as soon as eight weeks. Since many shorebirds are high plains pothole ponds to arctic circle nesters the ones seen in the summer on Monomoy are not necessarily nesting here.

Threats along the way include toxins, habitat loss and degradation, collision with structures, light pollution, hunters, egg collectors, climate change affecting nutrition and weather, and predators including house cats.

Numbers are down globally by 37 percent, according to Manomet Bird Observatory.

There are ups and downs in local numbers.

Shorebird populations declined precipitously in the 1800s during market hunting's height.

Veit and Petersen, in Birds of Massachusetts (1993), wrote, "The numbers of shorebirds reported feeding on the flats were apparently almost ten times higher in the 1940s than they are today. A possible explanation is that increased exposure to the ocean since the breaching of the north end in 1960 and Inward Point in 1978 has altered the sediment content of the flats. Observers who recall birding at Monomoy when it was still connected to Morris Island remark that the flats were much muddier then." (Their book, with its simple listings of bird populations, somehow catches in numbers the windy spirit of the plight of living birds; their filial and community dispersals and struggles to maintain

life, against limitation or even extinction.)

In the second half of the 20th century on into the 21st perhaps from 20 to 30 species on average have been documented on the Refuge, with thousands in migration foraging, roosting; (the CCP states some 67,000 shorebirds use the refuge annually).

In 1999 Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge was designated a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) regional site. It is also an Important Bird Area (IBA). The refuge was designated as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network regional site based on a maximum one-day count in 2006 of approximately 21,000 shorebirds!

The collections of dunlins, ruddy turnstones, semipalmated sandpipers, sanderlings, black bellied plovers can be astounding. And you never know when a short billed dowitcher, Hudsonian godwit or rare stilt sandpipers, bar-tailed godwit, ruff, or buff breasted sandpiper may fly through.

(One of the delights for me on the Moys is the shorebird aural regalia of these egg and sand colored birds: twoo twoo twoo of yellowlegs, wee willette, wee wee willette of willets freaking out when you near their nest scrapes, pee poo pee poo of the piping plover, the fierce kekking, chirring and oinking of common and least terns in their black caps and spiffy white plumage, the pebbles rolling together sound of the multi-hued turnstones, and the general clattery gobble chittering of masses of shorebirds in conversation, as well as the mysterious Tiggery worra worra of gulls at night.)

Wading birds too are here. By 1990, for example, twenty pairs of those ridiculous-red-beaked-black-and-white American oystercatchers nest in the marshes, increasing their numbers each season. In 2016, Cape Cod Chronicle's Tim Wood reported, "Eighteen American oystercatchers nested on the refuge, with poor productivity. There were also 185 black-crowned night heron nests, 100 snowy egret nests, 25 great egret nests and three glossy ibis nests. These wading birds nest primarily on North Monomoy Island, which has been eroding due to the 2013 break in South Beach. If the saltmarsh habitat continues to degrade, wading bird habitat will be reduced…"The Refuge reported the American Oystercatcher count for 2022 at 19 pairs.

Ducks

Sea ducks such as eider and scoter, are so-called diving ducks. Bay ducks which also inhabit fresh water, also have their divers, seen screwing themselves up to jet over into the depths: redhead, canvasback, scaup, bufflehead, goldeneye, mergansers. Ducks which surface feed (upturning into the waters) or dabble are such as mallards, black, pintail, widgeon, teal and shoveler. These usually prefer "puddles" or fresh water, but, as in the case of black sand mallards which can be found on salty waters, not all the time.

In the 1960s, there were 3000 Black ducks, baldpate (widgeon), Green-winged teal, to mention a few of the species coming to the ponds. (The 5-acre estuarine Hospital Pond at the northern end of South Monomoy Island, and as the Refuge states, "Big and Little Station Ponds are 32-acre and 11-acre freshwater ponds, respectively, on South Monomoy Island, originally formed when a bay was closed off by the growth of a re-curved spit. Other small freshwater ponds and wetlands are present on South Monomoy Island. Most are natural, but a few lie in depressions excavated by the Service in the 1950s in effort to increase waterfowl habitat.")

While numbers of ducks have declined within some of the species passing through in spring, in the fall there has been an increase of gadwall, shovelers, canvasback, redheads, to name a few. In fact, hundreds of thousands of puddle and bay ducks migrate by. And the refuge hosts the "largest variety of breeding waterfowl in Massachusetts." Teal, gadwall, Black ducks, along with mallard, Canada goose, widgeon, pintail, are known to have hatched eggs here. Other notable ducks, particularly visible on those gorgeous golden autumn days are ruddy and scaup. And Monomoy NWR has "among the highest species richness of breeding waterfowl throughout the state," the refuge's hunting plan of 2019 states.

Buffleheads, as well as red-breasted mergansers, goldeneye, even the rare and beautiful gem of a Barrow's goldeneye, are seen on the ponds and swimming in shallow bay waters. Tens of thousands of sea ducks including the Black, White-winged and Surf scoters along with oldsquaw may migrate by, especially in fall to winter. In the 18th century sea-diving ducks floated in huge rafts. Their numbers had declined according to Ludlow Griscom's The Birds of Massachusetts, from the 19th to the 20th century. He thought tanker disasters of the Pendleton and Fort Mercer, in 1952 released oil which was alleged to have slaughtered seabirds. He said White-winged scoters alone numbered 100,000 a day! passing overhead in the past. Wallace Bailey, whose book Monomoy Wilderness is still an excellent source for complete lists of the birds and botany of the place, reported 20,000 Surf scoters in the 1950s, half that number in the 1960s.

Ludlow Griscom wrote, "Huge mussel beds have attracted as many as half a million eiders and scoters in late fall and winter." From 1940 to 1951 eider alone off Monomoy increased their wintering flock to half a million – other accounts say one million, indeed millions in the 1960s (with a population breeding range increase perhaps due to some eider transplanted to Massachusetts, according to the Wilson Journal of Ornithology, although Auk, Vol. 107, in 1989 disputes these high counts.)

Hundreds of thousands of eider and scoter are reported in the 1970s government report to Congress. Though rafts of hundreds of thousands of

eiders and scoter still may assemble off the island, numbers in the 1990s were said to have not been as great as in the 1960s, perhaps as Peterson and Veit suggest, because of dispersal rather than decline. A mysterious virus, possibly tick borne, and studied by Cornell scientists, has been causing die offs among rafts of eider in offshore Cape waters since 1998. In 2020, as many as 3,000 eider each year on the Cape may have died from a mysterious virus noted by Wellfleet Bay Sanctuary and thus given the name named Wellfleet Bay Virus (WFBV). Nonetheless , in the 2,000's a plane survey counted half a million eider, with 360,000 counted off Monomoy Point in 2010. (Interestingly, eider and scoter numbers go up on odd and down in even years, according to Monomoy bird banding station, demanding more study. Monomoy Bird Observatory MRBS report 2018.)

It should be noted that, "Waterfowl hunting for duck, goose and coot is permitted offshore (west) of South Monomoy Island."

Passerines

United States Congress, 1970 Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs remarks that on Monomoy, "Flights of warblers and other small songbirds fill the low thickets during migration." Virtually everything that can be seen on the Cape can be seen on the islands: warblers, kinglets, Red-winged blackbirds, jays, Savannah sparrows, Sharp-tailed sparrows. There are numerical bursts such as 1000s of tree swallows staging for fall migrating in 1971. (One wonders what kind of inventiveness or pioneer spirit makes these mainland birds select sites so distant. One thinks about the "pioneer" genes sociobiologist E.O Wilson mentions – they, the risk-takers, are likely to die out by their dangerous new choices, yet if they succeed, they are likely to have a whole new piece of the ecological and biological pie to their genes. At one point a family of crows nested on North Island. One wonders what deed ashore caused them to migrate out here? Fratricide on a fellow crow, owl murder with a vengeful owl awaiting, a mutated gene causing sociable crows to be isolationists? A new food supply?)

One hundred eighteen species of passerines were banded at South Island in the years 2011-2014 and 2017-18. James Junda founded the nonprofit Monomoy Bird Observatory, in partnership with the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In 2011. He followed in the footsteps of famous ornithologists Roger Tory Peterson and Gus Griscom, bird banders in the early 1900s, and Mass Audubon in the 1980s. Data goes to the U.S. Geological Survey's Patuxent bird-banding lab for anyone to access. Long-term data helps assess trends, which species are doing well, and which are not. Junda told me that climate change knocks migration patterns out of whack, throwing off availability of food and optimal arrival time on breeding grounds, and that that agricultural pesticides

have caused a plummet in insect numbers, so insectivorous birds are in rapid decline, even in protected areas. According to him, "Ninety to 95 percent of juveniles won't make it."

Raptors

Denver Holt, who at first had to put up with put downs from the nature establishment for his self-taught fascination with, and lack of formal education about, owls, did a wonderful habitat by owl by number by season study a few years ago around these parts before hightailing it out of the Squanto/Chatham curse, into the high west of Montana where he is duly appreciated. Owls do nest on Moy and do come there, but recently fewer and fewer of them. Shorteared owls, once residents with five pairs nesting in 1986, have become more and more uncommon as year-round residents, seen mostly at the south. (The Moy shortears were said to represent a quarter or so of Massachusetts nesters. I may have picked up a Shortear feather on the south part of the north in the summer of '94.) Great horneds occasionally nest or fly over to predate such things as terns and gulls, with an increase in hungry juveniles in fall. Snowy owls haunt in certain cyclical winters. Other owls and raptors pass over habitually, occasionally staying for a time, such as saw-whet owls, more likely to have nested when Hospital Pond was swampier with more thicket. Harriers, also considered a threatened species, have occasionally nested: the beautiful and smaller tiercel of the silver male tossing food to the larger brown female in mid-air, both pivoting on their Origami-angled dihedral wings, showing the white rumps which mark their kind the world over, are common nesters here. But they, like the shorteared owls, are in fact rare and endangered elsewhere. Falcons and hawks pass over in fall and spring, not in the hordes seen at other places on the Cape. Eagles by sets often land on both isles to pick slowly at carrion in summer and fall. Nothing like seeing a peregrine freak out shorebirds on North Island, the swift hunter confused by obfuscating clouds of wings.

Herons and Egrets

Are plenteous, by the scores in migration. Snowy egrets and black-crowned night herons nest here, whilst the great blue heron becomes scarce in nesting season, preferring other locales inland.

Pelagic Birds

Rarely coming close to the islands' shores may be the pelagic birds associated with the far whales: shearwaters, skuas, petrels. More occasionally jaegers in spring and fall blow in, wrecked by winds. These pelagics bring something so sharply exotic, so other-worldly in their shapes, that to me they are like apparitions from another world, another planet where whales rule. Gannets, gannets in the thousands (4500 in one day alone in fall of 2018 Monomoy

banding station reported), and kittiwakes also float by in migration. Alcids are seen in cold weather offshore, from a dovekie or two, to perhaps many guillemots and murres, to even the occasional puffin.

Threats

It is not just that the numbers of species are dwindling. It is that the numbers within the groups are fewer in most cases.

As we have said, the overall pattern for terns and piping plovers seems to be that of a decline which took wind during the pluming of the late 1800s, gullied at the century's turn, found a rise by the 1930s-50s, then a fluctuating success, dropping slowly towards the present stasis. The pattern fits the picture for other birds, although many of them do not stabilize but decline. Although some species of ducks, swans, geese, starlings, pigeons, and yes, gulls seem to be holding their own and some individual species which have been helped by man begin to show encouraging signs of recovery such as ospreys in coastal marshes (or oystercatchers on Monomoy), the overall picture can be frightening.

As many articles have pointed out, habitat destruction around the world, pollution, toxins, climate change, overhunting, egg harvesting, collisions with tall buildings have contributed to the decline of birds from warblers to those of the shore.

Migrating birds are limited to a few square miles or meters in their breeding and feeding grounds. What is in those areas, how they hang together is crucial. If the space is lost, those circular turfs are irreplaceable.

But birds' purviews are not limited to just those territories of foraging, mating, nesting. They have a much larger range. They are connected like invisible veins of the world to stopping areas such as Monomoy, as well as to southerly wintering grounds from below the Mason Dixon line of this nation on through Mesoamerica to the tip of South America. They slide up and down their flyways like a tide through the New World, by season. The callous exploitativeness of the north now is invading the warmer, less greedy south of the Americas, by dint of mechanization and development –and the accompanying ethos. In the southern hemisphere of the Americas, impoverished people gather and eats endangered eggs. Perhaps a richer economy will prevent hungry people from eating sea turtle eggs in Latin America. Perhaps it will stop them from market-hunting terns and shorebirds down there in Guyanian wintering grounds as documented by a former Mass Audubon tern warden. But as plantations and maquiladoras enslave people – depriving them of a holistic life in return for a specialized one, based not on subsistence but on the promise of currency, not on a rich family and interior life, but a wealthy exterior life – plantations cut down habitat and industrialization continues the degradation, despoilation, and tyranny over man and the land. Every living creature suffers, as does every

inanimate one.

Patchiness, cutting a feeding or non-breeding or breeding homeroom in nature's house into bits, despoils breeding ability, territoriality; resource availability changes resource reactiveness, changes behavior. For man, too. The world was not meant, at least for animals, to be cut into constricted memos, dioramic examples of what used to be. Japanese gardens may be fine for humans, they do not sustain wildlife. Protecting a species in one area, only to murder its habitat in another, is unwise conservation. As Skip Lazell pointed out eloquently, in This Broken Archipelago, as of course, did E.O. Wilson before him, the islands of wildness become, like all islands, depleted of diversity. A godwit whose family room in the Hudson or James Bay is dammed for Hydro Quebec, will not return to Monomoy through no fault of the island's. We may see its northern invisibility revealed here in our sand, but will we remember, for instance, the Cree who do not migrate here and are out of our sight?

When the distant nesters, the pelagic birds show a decline on the toxic, black, gummy seas, their onshore and limited nesting grounds reduced by pollution as well, then we can know the end of the world is near.

We can call each other on our cell phones as we watch it on our screens.

Threats also come locally from human disturbance at nesting sites. Not only do feet and off-road vehicles crush birds and their eggs (some people even deliberately vandalize signing and exclosures!) but flushed birds, such as ethologist/biologists Joanna Burger and Eric Strauss found independently, especially young ones, become too stressed when disturbed to feed well; they are made more aggressive and competitive with their sibs. (Incidentally, slower moving bipeds flush fewer birds.)

The persecuted-by-man, those threatened by other species may at least find a home on this broken, few-miles-long, minimal strip where they are cossetted, cared about.

Fish

Monomoy is part of the land which protrudes above the continental slope, which extends out to the George's Banks and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket south of the Cape, and then drops off at the continental shelf's edge. (https://apps-nefsc.fisheries.noaa.gov/nefsc/ecosytem-ecology/physicla.html)

The waters sloshing about above these peaks and valleys north of the Cape and south of her make Cape Cod a dividing line. There are warmer waters in Nantucket Sound to the south, colder waters in Cape Cod Bay. They are fed by the Gulf Stream and the Gulf of Maine and Labrador currents. Monomoy creates her own recipe of waters like a mini-Cape. One side of her

is curved to the more pacific Nantucket Sound, whilst the east side, facing the chilly Atlantic, lathers itself in lashing cold waters. "The confluence of the cold Labrador Current and the warmer Gulf Stream, (creates) an ecological transitional zone where the ranges of southern and northern species overlap." (Center for Coastal Studies 2003 in the CCP 2016).

Monomoy is edged by the meeting of the Atlantic Bight and the Gulf of Maine. The Bight defines the geological bowl of the continental shelf under the piece of water stretching from the Cape to the Mid-Atlantic states before it drops off into the deep oceanic zone. The Gulf of Maine does the same from the Cape up to the Bay of Fundy. Waters passing down from the Labrador Current swirl around, mix with those of the Gulf of Maine and affect the salinity and temperature of the Atlantic reaching the northeast of the Cape including Monomoy. The Bight at its inner edge near the Moy, is met by waters coming up from Nantucket Sound. On the Bight's outer edge passes the warm Gulf Stream, carrying tropical currents, curling up next to George's Banks.

This charge of negative and positive temperatures (allied with that of the weather's temperatures) not only made "Chatham create the fog," as a lovely elderly lady told me while we both disappeared into it, but it kept the place swept in varied fish – for the Moy, like the Cape itself, because of the waters, is a dividing line for species. Monomoy east and west, mixes water temperature, water speed, water salinity in a unique and still largely unexplored way to create a large variety of fish species.

Listed in the CCP are approximately 100 species of fish, salt and fresh, which may be on or around the Moys.

Since the 1960s, due to global temperature changes, northern waters seem to be getting warmer, receiving southern species, even as the land has received a more southern species of bird. The fog is diminished on the Cape compared to my childhood, but it does stay around Chatham and the Moy. Indeed, as of this revision, climate change threatens to completely disrupt the patterns of these currents and thus the fish who swim in them.

Through the seasons water temperatures change. Cold, end-of-winter seas become cool spring seas, warmed on the surface. While the sun heats the surface, becoming warmer and warmer through summer, the ocean settles into strata of warm and cold, transition zones called thermoclines. By early fall, the warmth starts to be given out to the atmosphere. While in winter the totality of sea water is warmer than the land in the northern hemisphere acting as a heat sink to power the clockwise motions of the wind and weather, the oceans around the Cape become very cold in their upper layers.

The warmth of late summer seas, the chill of winter ones in the coastal waters south of the Cape, undergo even more severe changes than those in the Gulf of Maine. Seas churned by temperature changes and stirred by winds let the

decayed life-making sediment on the bottom rise as nutrients up to the top fluids layers to help nourish those such as plankton. Plankton bursts aroused by temperature and light changes help give rise to and support fish migrations.

Fish, like every other creature and plant, have their niches to cling to; areas of circumstance for and by and from which they have changed their behavior and biology. Affected by the need for certain salinities – (saltiness is made denser by cold, changes its degrees of parts as seawater travels up into land to meet fresh) – or temperatures, or conditions of calm or turbulence, they move about or stay as the seasons change their habitats.

Presumably, fish from the south which find limits at the bottom of the Cape turn up on the left side of the Moy at the Sound, while those from the colder Canadian waters which find limits at the north and east sides of the Cape turn up at Monomoy's right hand side; then they all mix at the south in the middle. Some fish like the outer waters of Monomoy, some like to lurk in shoal waters. Some like to stay inshore in warm weather, move off in winter. Some like it the other way around, depending on their adaptation to temperature and salinity, their food requirements. Often the same species of fish swim in both waters, but in different populations with different migratory patterns.

In recent times, the fish of historic or economic importance have been fairly well documented. We can never know for sure what species, fitting which conditions of cold and warmth, of shallowness and sandiness, of swift or slow waters inhabited our area prior to 19th century records. But there are a few reports: "About mid-May come into the harbour the main school of bass and bluefish, which they take with seines, some fishes of a foot and a half, some of two foot, and some of three foot long." These continue, says John Pory, writing of Plymouth in 1622, through August. Monomoy was not in Massachusetts Bay, yet the story was likely the same. And is the same. By May, bluefish arrive to eat arriving mackerel, menhaden; they, like many other fish including the striped bass and mackerel will spawn from May to June. Bluefish young, the snappers, will ride up into the creeks in spring. The bluefish who have peaked their numbers in staging schools in August, will head out by September's end. Sometimes a froth of silver, like Jason's teeth sown, with upflopping smaller fish, will be bluefish chasing the smaller mackerel or herring into shore as they eat them. Bluefish have a reputation for being gluttons, eating reserves of menhaden and mackerel voraciously. Bluefish were thought in the 1870s to have depleted the menhaden as a valuable source of fertilizer, until it was realized the weirs had. In Thoreau's time, huge slicks of fish oil from bluefish feasts were said to be seen. The terns, "mackerel gulls" as they were called in Forbush's time, scrunch, hover and dive on the herded rips, a bi-seasonal, migratory delight. Incidentally, bluefish have been found (in the 1990s) to spawn on the George's. (P.C. N. Manter.) Larger bluefish on Cape Cod have been found to have unhealthy concentrations of PCBs.

As a nifty piece in "saltycape online" (https://saltycape.com/monomoy-shoals/) states that about the shoals around Monomoy from June through July are, "Sea bass, fluke, scup, bluefish, stripers… Why is this spot so prolific? The simple answer is that it holds massive amounts of bait which include sand eels, squid, mackerel, pogies, herring, crabs, silverside… List goes on. I don't think you can find a baitfish that resides on Cape Cod that does not show up here at some point in the season. (Forgot butterfish!) I think so much bait congregates in the area because the Monomoy shoals serve as the intersection point between the warm waters of Nantucket Sound and the cool 'Labrador Current' waters east of the Cape. Essentially two borders penning in the bait." Bonito and false albacore are also taken offshore by boat or even from shore.

Striped and the rare black bass move as far north as Canada in spring, back south in fall, and may be seen in other Cape waters as well. Striped bass flap up towards shore in spring. They flourish after a spring spawning peak, from May to November, when they perform a fall migration and are often found farther offshore, heading south. (A good time to fish them on Monomoy is June.) These breeders in brackish waters from May to June, where they lay their eggs, are currently in decline.

The hermaphroditic, very tasty black sea bass in Nantucket Sound sometimes follow stripers a ways inshore, stopping before water becomes brackish; moving offshore in October and were in the past best taken at night in boats which concentrated themselves on the west and east sides of Monomoy and Morris Island respectively. Black sea bass swim in Nantucket Sound and recently have moved north toward the Gulf of Maine due to warming waters according to Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries. They have risen in population as of 2018. They were more prolific around the Moy when there were more shipwrecks to afford protection but according to Edward Kooyomjian of Monomoy Tackle, can be well-fished at the Monomoy rips.

Mackerel, living in two populations from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Carolinas, school on the surface, migrating northwards from the south in warm water, as well as in towards shore. They seem to curve out and down into deeper waters in the winter. They have cycled in numbers from prolific to rare. They are heading farther north due to plankton changes from climate change and causing international conflicts over their fisheries. NOAA declares them in decline as overfished. They still leave in fall, after a spring through summer breeding, earlier in the southerly part of their range than the northerly. As a recent Atlantic article so well describes, "It travels in shoals that can be more than 100 feet deep and 600 feet wide, and sometimes, when this great nomadic army catches a glimmer of light, it can resemble an underwater version of the northern lights." (Creature Feature: Atlantic Mackerel, Scomber scombrus | Mass.gov)

Cod was the bottom fish to catch from April to November and indeed all

year round. The cod which spawns its millions of eggs in winter moved in various populations, by age group and locale, up from the south, northeast towards the Moy in warm weather, west in cold, while northern groups from the Gulf of Maine came in closer in winter and moved off in summer. Though not in the hordes of historic years, down in the waters hungry cod, around in different northern and southern populations all year, still munch on available crustaceans, often preferring bivalves' succulent meat. But around the Cape and Moy, they are scarce. Indeed, cod catch in our waters has declined by 98 percent by 2020.

Cod relatives pollock and hake swim from the Moy to the Banks and the Gulf. Some species of bottom dwelling hake swim closer to shore, but still relatively far out, in spring, breed in summer, a month earlier in the north than in the south, migrate back offshore in fall. White hake breed in the Bight, from fall to spring with a Christmas peak.

Haddock, a fish of deep waters well offshore to the south, comes inshore to the north and over to the Banks and can be hooked, trawled or deep gill-netted especially in winter. According to the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries good management has resulted in abundance on the George's Banks and the Gulf of Maine. (Some of this management includes as of this writing the prohibition of gillnetting in Nantucket Sound, including nearshore waters around Monomoy from April 1 to November 15.) Summer fluke and winter flounder which are also bottom fish can be found. While hake (whiting) is increasingly rare, haddock is abundant out towards the George's. Fluke peaks at summer's end; flounder has been best found on Morris Island's east side (sheltered now as the northwest side was, but not as constricted by sandflats as the northwest is now). (For a list of fishes see Table 3.14. Essential Fish Habitat at Monomoy NWR in the CCP)

Epic migrations of schooling fish such as bluefish or bass take them farther away to escape the coastal cold for the warmer waters off the edge of the Continental shelf and of the Gulf Stream. Colder water, more pelagic fish such as cod, pollock, hake and so on were and are more north-and-easterly, long-distance migrants, with American mackerel taking more coastal southerly routes.

Monomoy has mini estuaries on its southwest tip running out of Hospital Pond and Powder Hole These should be nurseries for juvenile fish of many species as well as the killifish and mummichogs which feed larger fish. (The two Station Ponds are now landlocked, with fresh/brackish water.)

Some fishes stick to southwest Monomoy with local migrations according to the brackish, shallower conditions of the embayments and intertidal zones sheltering them. Shallower water can be subject to more severe temperature changes. So, the strategy for some is to swim offshore a little way and tuck into muck in semi torpor. Or like toadfish, hide behind rocks.

In these warmer southwestern and shallower waters, sometimes in brackish estuaries, lurk some fishes such as the Northern sea robin, sculpin, puffer, cunner, rare goosefish (though this benthic fish can be found though down to 1,000 feet), scup or porgy (as opposed to menhaden or pogy), weakfish (rare on the Moy), butterfish, winter and summer flounder. (https://www.eregulations.com/massachusetts/fishing/saltwater/commonly-caught-species)

In the past, black seabass and some species of hakes were more likely to turn up in southwesterly locales, squiggling into the muck of the various "holes." (To find out about south Cape fish from the point of view of one old Roccus saxitalis, the old book, The Shining Tides, by W.M. Brooks is wonderful.) (Roccus Saxitalis, Black Bass, a multi- species jazz rock symphony with bass, saxophone and sea sound.)

Tomcod once upon a time swam in spring from brackish winter waters where they overwintered in a torpor to saline waters offshore in bays and sounds and estuaries in spring. (10 Great East Coast Fisheries That No Longer Exist | Field & Stream (fieldandstream.com)

In the tidal bay stream mouths, sluggish young tautog lurk in winter, while close by little skates lay eggs offshore, probably at the northwest of the Moy, for these fish need yet more sheltered waters. Incidentally, fish of Nantucket Sound tend to go south and east for the winter; while moving back into shore west and north, in the warmth.

The winter flounder moves inshore in winter to shoaler waters all around the area from southwest to north, heading out to deeper water in early spring, while the summer flounder comes in.

And all these fishes had and have their vagaries, such as herring rising upwards, striped bass, pollock moving towards shore at dusk. Seeking light, seeking warmth, seeking food, seeking protection, seeking procreation in their electric, singing worlds.

Lastly, though it would take volumes to cover all the fishes – one more must be mentioned – for birds such as terns, on Monomoy (as well as for seals, fish and humpback whales in other locales such as Stellwagen Bank), sand launces (sand lance, sand eel), finger length fishes which burrow in the sand and mud of intertidal flats and spawn offshore at Christmas, when the terns and whales are long gone anyway, are critical edibles. Because they, like whales, feed on zooplankton, changes in ocean temperature can affect their food stream which in turn affects the terns.

A Few Freshwater Fishes

Fresh water perch, pickerel, dace, sunfish, catfish, Smallmouth bass may have populated the tiny freshwater ponds shown on maps of the mid 1800s and apparently about in the 1900s on Monomoy. But, especially in the manmade

ponds, blue-green algae proliferating from the abundant avian fecal matter, sometimes gucking up the pond edges with slime and giving off a noxious scent, have on occasion snuffed out their oxygen supply.

Invertebrates

Just as the sea has zones from deep and extremely deep water to shallow, so too, where the sea meets the land has a spectrum. The subtidal zone is beneath the water offshore. The edge of the water, and just under it, where it meets the land is the sublittoral. Then there is beach and also come the intertidal flats of sand and/or mud, revealed at low tide to high, sometimes with tidal pools; then tidal flats near spartina marsh interlaced with tidal creeks and low salt pannes. These various water and salt infiltrated tissues of the land are invaded by invertebrates adapted to circumstances, to waters warm or cool, fast or slow, salty or less so. They sip themselves up into the sands of some of these areas, occasionally glue onto the rocks, onto other creatures, or float around in water.

Tiger Beetles and Horseshoe Crabs

South Monomoy is a site of reintroduction of the threatened Northeast Beach Tiger Beetle which MassWildlife's Tim Simmons and USFW's Paul Nothnagle spearheaded. Successful translocation of 113 of Martha's Vineyard larvae to Monomoy resulted in thousands of the beetles, facilitating translocation now to other places! (Advanced BioConsulting leads a four-year project to re-establish a population of the threatened Northeastern Beach tiger beetle - Advanced BioConsulting)

The other most important, famous Monomoy invert is the Horseshoe crab. It's one of the biggest spawning areas in Massachusetts. Here, as elsewhere on the Atlantic Flyway, horseshoe crab eggs are critically important for migrating shorebirds, especially the critically endangered red knot.

At the edge of water and flats the limulus appears in the full moons and the spring (highest) tides of May, waddling into the shallows of North Island up its tidal creeks. The eager male horseshoe crabs nuzzle my black sneaker, pile onto larger females in late June tepid tidal streams. This is one area where man competes with the birds. Horseshoe crabs have been long taken for scientific research. Their copper rich blue blood, the only thing they have in common with true crabs, being themselves more closely related to other arthropods such as spiders, is used for medical research, where once it was gathered for fertilizer. (These wonderful, ancient animals, around since the Carboniferous, and in prior evolutionary forms since the Paleozoic.) Recent laws have limited the medical take; blood is drawn, and the animal is released.

On Monomoy take of limulus has been federally outlawed since 2000 including any areas under dispute with the town. This and a lack of habitat degradation has helped the animal (one of my favs) thrive with well over 7,000

tagged so that their movements may be studied between 2001-2014. (See Massachusetts Wildlife, no 1. 2012, Slow Nation by Lee Roscoe.)

Red knots very much rely on horseshoe crab eggs. Critically endangered, they are being studied intensively on Monomoy which is an important stopover for them after Delaware Bay, in order to better protect them.

Other Inverts

"Countless species of marine invertebrates, including marine worms, amphipods and other crustaceans, and tiny mollusks that inhabit the refuge's intertidal flats furnish a vital food source for shorebirds and seabirds," according to the 1988 Environmental Assessment Plan for Monomoy.

In 2007, refuge staff assessed the spineless. (See the CCP for a list.) The many species include nereis, the clam worm; lug and blood worms; insects, including butterflies, dragonflies; and snails, whelks et al; snakes including garter ribbon and hognose; crabs and hermit crabs live here.

From Cape Cod and south, sea urchins, sand dollars, sand shrimp, mud snails creeping tunicates, certain obelia spp. (hydrozoans), hairy sea cucumbers, like warmer waters. Organisms such as Peanut worms are more prevalent to the south while such enchanting globs as the orange-footed sea cucumber exist from the Arctic to the Cape, along with the likes of the northern basket star (a spiney urchin, echinoderm.) Because of Monomoy's position, as with fishes, a mix of inverts, some of these critters from both waters may turn up here, (though only a few of the above are reported). Those liking warmer water more likely to be found at the south and west, those liking colder, at the east.

(I think of the Report of the Commissioner of Fisheries of 1871, and how populations of creatures of intertidal and marsh flats have not changed that much from then to now. The report has some of my favorite descriptions of the inverted inverts, including lovingly drawn tunicates expanding and contracting their Grimm's fairytale tentacles; it makes charming, believe it or not, the lives of fiddler crabs, worms, mollusks, tidal creek fishes, the unloved and neglected of the animal world, which only a few others such as Dorothy Stirling or Donald Zinn bring to life.)

Mollusks and Shellfish

Monomoy represents of Chatham's shellfish bed take nearly 80 percent, all year round. The CCP reported, "In 2011, nearly 1.4 million live pounds of shellfish were harvested in the Chatham area, and more than one-half of the harvest originated from Monomoy. About 50 percent of the Monomoy harvest was northern quahogs (786,632 live pounds). In 2011, Monomoy shell fishermen also landed more than 20,655 pounds of bay scallops, 10,449 pounds of softshell clams, and 42,982 pounds of whelks."

There are mussels, perhaps fewer than in the past when wharves could support

their byssal threads, but they, with sea clams, were dredged from Nantucket Sound's shallow waters west of Monomoy. By 2016, they were off limits to taking on the refuge because of their importance to eider and oystercatchers. (Off Chatham and Pleasant Bay, the CCP reports in "the past 20 years, on average, the typical mussel harvest has been about 28,000 bushels.")

There are fewer scallops shuttling along with their seeing eyes, attaching themselves to vegetation, perhaps because their sheltering eelgrass, which while dense around Monomoy, is not as plenteous as it once was.

The channeled and knobbed whelks (conch-like and good eating) like sandy bottoms, shallower waters, while the waved whelk likes it colder, slightly deeper. (Exposure, shelter, temperature set parameters, even as fresher or saltier waters and aquatic vegetation may set the stage for tidal and watery creatures.) The whelks and their necklaces of egg cases, the moon snails and their "collar" eggs, dwell at the subtidal but come up into the intertidal to eat and to strand. You can see them on the Moy, particularly the predatory, mollusk eating moon snails. (Imagine having a brain around your neck, your stomach in your foot, and a single rasp with which to poke holes in shells before your proboscis sucked up their meat like a straw.)

Sex changing boat snails (also called slipper shells) are not as common here as they are in places like Squaw Island, where they have harder objects to attach to. Jingle shells, those orange fragile delights of children some call clinks shells, are more common other parts Cape Cod.

Echinoderms

Some sea urchins, brittle and other starfish feed on mussels, but I have seldom seen them wash up onto western flats, perhaps because there are not enough beds of offshore subtidal vegetation for them to slither over as there once were. Some of these are not listed by the CCP. (Starfish, really called sea stars, brittle stars and sea urchins lay over prey and ingest by turning their stomachs inside out, rather like a suction cover you put on your sink drain.) I have not once found a sand dollar. These eat bits of detritus and are eaten in turn by flounder and other fish. They like sandy bottoms, so I don't know why I am not seeing any. Maybe just bad timing or luck. Or perhaps the waters are a touch too turbulent or cold, even on the lee side.

Crabs

Rock crabs lurk in the colder offshore waters of the east. These like surfy, cold waters. Jonah crabs should sidle about farther out under the well-aerated, colder, surfy water, which there is enough of here at the east and even at the south, but then they, like rock crabs, also tend to seek out rocks; few are underwater here. Occasionally a speckled, purplish, molted crab case appears; hard to tell which brand it is. Maybe the gulls imported it. Maybe it washed

ashore. Maybe it's a molt. Seems however it arrived, I have seen many Jonah and rock crab cases out here.

Dappled lady crabs skitter off to the side in sandy bays - with their many eyes on branches, swim inshore, perusing carrion they eat, themselves scavenged by fish. Burying themselves in the closer subtidal sands, lady crabs molted, dotted shells are occasionally seen, but are not as common, as they, or their niche-sharers, the flounders, should be. (It is amazing when you think about how many creatures do bury themselves in sand, from certain fish to various bivalves and crabs, and worms, at their various substrata.) Spider crabs use their many legs to swim, but they like to decorate themselves with seaweed and there is not much of that here either. Occasionally it seems a gull has one of these crustaceans in its beak. Crabs here seem not quite as plenteous as in the more protected bays of the Cape.

When the waters of the northwest sheltered eelgrasses or were muddier at the edges underneath, and thus were warmer and slower, blue crabs spawned more copiously, along with the menhaden, bluefish, stripers. And let me not forget, there are lobsters. These bottom dwelling lurkers prefer rocky crevices but also do like the entrances to bays and sounds.

Sponges

Sponges also are invertebrate animals. They do dwell in the subtidal substrate, but rarely wash ashore. The best time to find nice complete bushes of foot long finger sponges, for instance on the Cape's bays, is early March or after a storm. You are more likely to see seaweeds (which are not animals but algal plants). Algae such as sea lettuce or kelp or green codium embraced by red strands of chenille weed, like a Christmas gift, or sea lettuce and long strands of brown kelp, wash ashore from below the tide line, while not much of the sea wracks and the knotted weeds, the Fucus and Ascophyllum species, of calmer embayments enter the wrack line or appear on the Moys and are not even listed in the refuge's assessment.

Intertidal

Mollusk Bivalves, and Polychaetes

I haven't seen false angel wings which are clams, don't remember blood or transverse arks. False angel wings, according to Stirling and others, like a place where peat or clay lie under the sand. No clay here, but plenty of peat. Don't know why the arks aren't here. The sand may be not quite muddy enough for these siphonless, toothed-shell clams living at the low tide line.

In the intertidal flats revealed at low tide especially on North Island, in the sand and mudlfats are the holes of many clams. There are soft shell steamers, hard shell quahogs, razor clams, tiny gemma clams. Other inverts in the sandflats include various marine polychaetes: segmented annelids, such as

nereis, the clam worm which can give a good nip to your hand, plume worms which seem to grow feathers around their heads; nemerteans such as the ribbon worms which can break into pieces and grow from those, with shorter, fatter lug worms and variously constructed and colored worms burrow, swim, bite; construct sand case houses for themselves; have odd hermaphroditic sexual habits brought on by the full spring tide moons, right out of a psychiatric handbook,.

On the higher intertidal flats, the crusty flats at low tide reveal a covering of brown Hildenbrandia, a kind of red mat algae; and near tidal creeks, over sand, is photosynthetic sulfur bacteria with a beautiful lilac pink color, reminiscent of a Navaho sand painting.

Occasionally masses of mud snails can be seen devouring the minutia of carrion, small clams, and plankton they live on. They migrate down to deeper waters to overwinter.

The whole spectrum of the intertidal marsh is limited here as compared to the more protected embayments of other parts of the Cape, even on Monomoy's more sheltered side. (I may be missing them but have seen very few fiddler crabs heave their big claws.) A few decades back a refuge biologist saw a few at the north in the 1980s, though now none are listed in the CCP. Male fiddlers eating algae from off the sand grains, ingest a great deal of sand with their food; eject pellets of it near their burrows. Females eat with both their smaller claws, having no need of a large claw on which to vibrate attraction to the opposite sex, or with which to fend off rivals. These fascinating beings have internal clocks, and like other crabs, I find them somehow quite lovable in their gutsy snark.

Other typically intertidal mollusks such as various brands of periwinkles do cluster in watery pits in the marshes, despite the lack of larger warm, sheltered tidal pools with suitable seaweeds. For these reasons it appears that hermit crabs are rare here, if not entirely absent. I have never seen one exchanging its adopted shell with another crablet; the waters close to shore and in the few tidal pools apparently are just not right, or perhaps I have not been on the Moy when they "excresce." Green crabs, a salt marsh critter, do live here, using their half lung, half gill to breathe; they burrow into muddy tidal creek banks for protection. Ribbed mussels, creek inhabiters, seem scarce, although various minnows, probably killifish, inhabit the streams. Yet of Fundulus spp. mummichog and killifish, of minnows and pipefish, alewives and eels, there seem not to be the droves that can appear onshore.

Coelenterates, the spineless jelly fish, float offshore and often drift up tidal rivers in high spring; their globules should make universes in shallow waters, but I did not see them until recently when thousands of them, moon jellies apparently, washed around dead on the Atlantic side of North Isle; some few were still alive. I like jellyfish: they seem like a kindly extraterrestrial hand

waving, with a mark of a falcon – its reproductive organs on its back – the universal Ra. Perhaps the waters had not been warmed enough until the sands of South beach closed in, to shelter them, or perhaps I had not come at the right time before. Everything changes.

While marshes are indeed important spawning grounds for larvae and juveniles of copious crabs and fishes, the Moy may have fewer young than the mainland. Those she holds are doubly important to the living and mineral organisms dependent on her waters. Her undoubtedly unique contribution to the interconnection of coastal waters health and the marsh is still largely unexplored.

Dryer-Loving Invertebrates
Insects and Amphipods

Include beach fleas or "sand shrimps" those krill-like, often transparent amphipods which hop out of hot sand, klutzing out, falling on their backs. (These invertebrates are more closely related to crustaceans than to conventional insects.) There are grasshoppers and field crickets in the grasses, dragonflies in the bogs. Green darners migrate through. Reddish marked, hunched saltmarsh dragonflies occasionally eat winged fodder on the marsh. Tabanus spp. (green heads, horse flies) should bite at the beach and marsh along with mosquitos, but I have found them blessedly absent because of the offshore winds. Five species of metallic Tiger beetles tumble about as beetles do, leaving their little balls of sandy earth about left from excavating their wee holes. Some other beetles (minute pirate beetles) are not much bigger than a pinhead and give a good nip to living flesh, insultingly mistaking it for carrion perhaps. Ants should be there but are seldom seen unless you look for them. Hordes of what appear to be flying ants hop up from the marsh on hot days. Papery winged flies of some kind, mayfly? dobsonfly? or more likely, seaweed flies of some sort act up, too. Of butterflies I made guesses, for no one has it documented it seems, and I have not seen many myself, save for a few possible skippers. But it is likely that there are bog coppers in the bogs, cloudless sulphurs attending to the wildflowers, painted ladies in spring migration, those cosmopolitan butterflies which fly about the world; monarchs in fall. Perhaps there is some kind of brown elfin, but hoary ones associated with the bearberry would not be here, since on Monomoy there seems to be no bearberry.) Between 1991 and 2010 the Massachusetts Butterfly Club catalogued numerous species, confirming my brown elfin and the others above – plus many more including spring azures and mourning cloaks, early arrivals; spring, pearl crescents, late arrivals, yes, monarchs, and many more such as swallowtail species, American coppers, and even red admirals and rare variegated fritillaries.

I think I saw a beautiful, pinky-orange on one side and dappled on the other – Rattlebox moth – in fall migration on the southern dunes near the shorebird flats.

There could be skippers on the saltmarsh or in the copses, along with a few satyrs and wood nymphs in the sparse woodlets. Maybe Harris's checkerspots, some kind of fritillary lurk over the shrubbery of freshwater spots, near the blue flag. (Indeed, about 20 species of butterflies on Monomoy were suspected as being there in the 2020s.) In the dry sands above high tides, all the way into the dunes, are the holes, the burrows of wonderful, hairy wolf spiders (arachnid not insect, technically), lurking to catch their victims.

Other Beings On The Moy

Mammals

The 1971 government reports lists a herd of 25 to 20 white tailed deer, red foxes, muskrat, occasional otter and mink, mice, shrews and moles. Animals noted have included white tailed deer, red foxes, muskrats, and occasional otter or mink; others report weasel, skunk, opposum and racoon, with possible fishers and definitely coyotes predating birds and eggs. (These are some of the same furry animals which historian Deyo lists for the Cape in the 1890s.) Before what may have been final eradication of them, a long-tailed weasel was sighted in 1983, and a racoon in 1986. (Did it swim across?) Rabbits may still bounce in thickets. Colonists may have imported, unwittingly, Norway rats. Bears and wolves were still on mainland Chatham in 1657; maybe they even sniffed around the Moy. (Wolves were not extinguished on the Cape until a massive campaign on the Upper Cape in the early 1700s.)

When the Moy is attached, more furred mammals sniff around the dunes and flats and creeks here for eggs, insects, beetles, and fish even as they do in Cape marshes, thickets and beaches. As the place detached from land in its cycles, some species could maintain populations; some species may have died out. It is hard to imagine deer maintaining much of a herd when the place was abundant with humans.

North Island now has no deer. Deer swim, and there has been a legend of deer dog-paddling to Monomoy from Nantucket to repopulate it Two dozen to thirty deer somewhat smaller in size than mainland ones, and fond of eating oddities such as poison ivy, allegedly inhabited the strands of thickets crossing South Island's swells during the 1980s. Deer numbers fell in early spring of 1985, 11 found dead: poor health from limited bark or berries of winter food, created a winter kill. The deer bred back up to 25 or so, supported by enough forage of grasses, sedges, to nibble in summer; water to drink; sheltered places in which to yard up. As of the 2000's there has been no census of them.

Only certain other animals could live here, those able to survive in tidal flat, marsh, dune, brackish pond. Masked shrews tunnel under wet muck, swim in water for small fish. Insects allow three species of bats to dip and click at dusk over the insect laden pools. Shrews perpetrate tunnels a few inches under any kind of soil,

munch on inverts crawling below as well as on other small rodents and occasionally each other. White footed mice thrive in dry, warm areas where they have plenty of berries to eat, and may borrow low bird nests for homes. At one time, according to author Barbara Chamberlain, a special Monomoy deer mouse evolved. Like the Muskegat vole on its Galapagos of Muskegat the mouse may have adapted to beach grasses for its survival. Unlike the Muskegat vole, muskrats on Monomoy may not be specially adapted by morphology or genes, but they are by behavior, making burrows in sand on North Island without the usual underwater entrances; eating much saltier vegetation than they are usually accustomed to. There are wetlands with their cattails and reeds the animals are associated with back on the south. Here they might build grass domes or, more likely, dig out burrows in mud banks; here they have fresher waters to swim in, seeking vegetation and fishes. Moist marsh grasses let voles skitter about in subsurface tunnels, nibbling grass roots, parting grasses for vole nests, copulating far more than rabbits ever dreamt of. (Voles may have seventeen litters a year. Hmm). Hairy-tailed mole, a wet loving digger, is not mentioned here in US Fish and Wildlife lists, but "zapus" the meadow jumping mouse is. (This peculiar jumping bean of an adorable mouse with very long tail, is the only animal besides groundhog to really hibernate on the Cape.) With foxes, coyotes and skunks and weasels eliminated, there really are no predators to compete with raptors and owls for the rodent munchies.

Offshore Mammals

Seals

Silky, pearly, harbor seals whose color of fur changes according to their degree of dryness or wetness from pale to darker, at 225 lbs. or so, look like half puppy, half pussy-willow, popping up and down in shallow waters, playing games with humans, arriving in late fall, leaving in March when the gulls are arriving on turf. They more or less come and go with the changing of the guard of cormorants from warm weather double crested to cold weather great. "Harbor seals using the Refuge as a haul out site peak at approximately 1,200 to 1,500 animals in mid-February," the 1988 management plan said. These animals have pupped here in the past. In 1994 about 500 used haul outs.

A small group of gray seals or horseheads (so named because of their head shape) have remarkably returned to a beachhead on Monomoy. In the 1990s, then Refuge Manager Sharon Ware, told me, "Gray seals using the Refuge peaked at about 50 animals in mid-February." At first the Monomoy grays didn't hang around much past early spring, dispersing to colder water, but in 1992 and 1993 some stayed all summer. I have watched them play at copulation, gallumphing rhinoscerusy up to each other from behind. Males are bigger than a human male and weigh over a half a ton.

They made news when in 1990, six pups in their birth sacs emerged and

Refuge Manager Dave Houghton spotted them, calling biologist Valerie Rough to study. Three seals came in 1991, none in the next years. (I was living with naturalists nearby when Dave came in to tell us the news!) By February 10 of 1994 or so, one seal had pupped.

Mass Audubon Wellfleet Bay's Bob Prescott told me one June day in the dreaming-heat that what I see is not a mirage, nor rocks, nor cormorants but is in fact, out across the inlet, gray seals by the hundreds. They, with a hundred or so harbor seals have made a habit recently of sticking around through the summer, thus notably expanding these pinnipeds' ranges. (The inner mind will find the outer world in this kind of heat is a bit like a slim shadow annealed to "reality," and the invisible rocks with the seals will become united.) The weird moaning coming from the sand bar across from the end of North Island near what is left of Broad Creek is the ululation of the gray seals.

As of 2023 the refuge website says that South Monomoy Island contains the largest gray seal haul-out site on the U.S. Atlantic Coast and the Refuge is a Marine Protected Area (MPA). May 2011, 19,166 individual gray seals hauled out on the refuge. Monomoy is also one of the largest haul-out sites for harbor seals in the Northeast. As many as between 30,000 and 50,000 haul out, eat and breed around Monomoy.

Brand new pups adorned the sands near the Monomoy Point lighthouse in mid-January of 2023 when I was revising this book, videoed by Topher Mira who told me they were three-week-old white furred babies and some four-week-old darker furred ones and that the count in 2022 was between 500 and 1,000!

(I could imagine this event: gray seals, milky furry white kids in the pale amniotic spume of rocking winter, almost concealed by the caul of thick spongey snows; snuggling up to their mums to drink that incredibly yogurt-rich first colostrum, creamy food, getting messy milky noses, still weak; squealing with newborn affectionate delight. Babies to the nth degree. Bringing out cross species maternal instincts, cross gender cooing.)

In six to eight weeks the single pearly gray pup will be weaned from its mother's thinner milk, to eat a variety of small fish and krill, even as his parents do. (A bit like humpbacks). Males are territorial and collect small harems of up to seven.

The grays have caused controversy. All but eradicated by the 1960s by bounties on them because fishermen then, as they do today, thought they competed for fish, the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 now makes that slaughter impossible. Grays can eat fifty pounds of fish a day and the Chatham weir fisher people, the Eldredges, say that grays steal lots of fish from the nets. Surfcasters have seen them take fish off their lines. Commercial fishermen say they are limiting their take.

https://newengland.com/yankee-magazine/living/new-england-environment/gray-seals/

Sharks

And this brings us to great white sharks. Many allege that the proliferation of gray seals has attracted the sharks to Chatham and Monomoy which are at the epicenter of their congregating since the mid-2,000s. Climate change's warming oceans have also likely contributed to increases of sharks in our waters. By 2021, 300 sharks were in Cape waters, according to Atlantic White Shark Conservancy (AWSC), with over 280 tagged for study by shark guru of the Mass Division of Marine Fisheries, Greg Skomal, and the AWSC by 2022.

With shark apps and buoys set around the Cape to track the sharks, the AWSC tried to clean up the animal's image, after a fatality and other attacks, claiming that as an apex predator they are good for the oceans and deserve to belong in our waters. And that attacks are rare, with the odds at 1 in 11.5 million. Shark sightings number in the thousands, and shark mania around Monomoy and Chatham is bringing tourists, while they also have inhibited many beach goers from swimming. It is advised not to look like a seal when you are in the water, avoid wet suits in shark turf. (https://www.onthewater.com/the-white-sharks-of-cape-cod)

And also

North Atlantic right whales used to pass here through the year. Now they, rarer and rarer, with a population of only about 350 as of 2023, threatened by ship strikes, entanglements and shifting of food due to climate change. Other whales of many kinds veer off from their Gulf Stream migrations from spring to fall, and sometimes might be spied; finback, humpback, minke, white sided dolphin, and those long-finned Pilot whales which beach so often on Cape beaches, often in fall.

Reptiles: Snakes, Frogs

There is a dearth of species of "herps," or study of them at least, on Monomoy. Refuge managers say there are garter snakes (brown striped) on both isles. Some black racers on the south have been claimed as sightings, but this is debated, and the racers may simply have been dark morph and large garter snakes. Ribbon and hognose (rare) have been sighted. (There are plenty of rodents here for the latter.) There are most likely water snakes but no reputable biologist has nailed them. The only turtle here allegedly is painted, in the fresh water. Diamond backed terrapins and the rare spotted turtles which like boggy areas should really be here; not even authority Skip Lazell made record of them a few decades back. Fowler's toads hobble at the north. American toads have been heard and seen. (Snakes are pretty peaceable, but oddly, they seem to

come out to turn their aggression against human witches who visit the island, as if sensing their human counterparts' cold blood. Witches ignore snakes, not warm enough to be bothered – so their strikes are a draw. It is amazing how implacable evil can be; even denying a snake its satisfaction with a freezing, disagreeable disdain.) It is strange that Monomoy, aside from its toads, is frogless. Green or bull, wood or tree froggies could have migrated to the area when it was attached. But no din of pepper magic screams in the spring. No unearthly shriek of frog mating urge or frog terror. Perhaps they would be drowned out by the babble of birds anyhow, or the babble of oceans.

Offshore there are sea turtles: greens have been sited according to Skip Lazell, long a basic source (along with the CCP for the refuge per se) for Cape amphibians and reptiles. Kemp's Ridley young making their way to Florida and back have been seen. Loggerheads, like some whales, frisk off course from the Gulf Steam near to the George's and Nantucket along with the very rare hawksbills once used for tortoiseshell combs. The incredible leatherbacks, man-sized and warm blooded, whose incoming and outgoing veins are stacked next to each other in their flippers, like the feet of sea ducks and the flukes and tails of whales, creating an internal countercurrent heat exchange to keep them warm in cold waters, may swim by.

All in all, Monomoy, as close as it is, as protected as it is, has been explored intensively by biologists tending to the more glamorous species. Many unknowns remain. To know the full catalogue would be to better understand how isolates disperse and carry their species. Who knows, maybe there is a Darwinian Monomoy evolution going on amongst its small kingdoms.

A Closer Look at Where What Is When

Throughout nature, almost by week, in each biome and habitat, things change. To know a place, you must understand its companioned communities. Not only is time linked to place, but so are kinds of species. One thing marks another; one event another.

Spring – Birds

Gulls, black-backed and herring, arrive on territory as early as March when the delicate and rare piping plovers first arrive along with Bonaparte's and laughing gulls. Great cormorants are leaving, so are buffleheads, scaup, mergansers.

Noticeably, arriving double crested cormorants haul out on offshore risings of sands along the way to the isles, archeopteryx-like, spread their wings in ancient benediction for the earth and the seas. (Do not insult these. They pray to another vision of the gods. Their pique will cause horrible storms.) The March cold seas begin to warm. The saltmarsh helps to create masses of plant plankton, diatoms which will contribute to the coastal phyto then zoo-

plankton bloom which feeds on the plant matter. Oldsquaw, mergansers, eider are still whizzing around over the waters near the boats, soon to begin to head north. Jaegers may keel by. In spring the coastal fish migrations begin; many fish aim for the warming inshore and coastal waters to spawn, to feed.

Some seals are leaving, some will stay.

In the tidal creeks by April, on the Cape, many fish get ready to spawn – the mummichogs and killifish which emerge from the tidal mud creek banks; the overwintering silversides of the marshes move up from creek mouths. Some fishes in Nantucket Sound, like tautog, move out of upper estuarine sluggishness, down to eat mussels growing again in the Sound.

By April, the alewives and herring of tidal creeks have finished spawning, though what their status was and is on Monomoy is not known. Herring, shad, with the menhaden and formerly, salmon, ran in warm weather starting in April. (Here? Yes, salmon were far more common around the Cape once, as were blue crabs and sturgeon, right whales and bass and cod.)

Mud snails, crabs, other shell-covered beasts begin to migrate back up into watery zones out of dormancy in sediments. New marsh grass begins to sprout up, green, while the dead winter grasses help nourish the tidal streams.

In early spring the muskrats begin to emerge from their shared dens, their winter fur sleek and long. Males will disperse to find mates before their fur molts.

Deer move out of their deep thickets to eat the emerging radical plant (Rhus radicans) the poison ivy, and other emerging plants.

While things flower here a bit later than onshore, some shadbush may proceed a brief lather of beach plum on South Island. This signals that soon warblers will pass along with other passerines. The whales are entering local waters.

Some black-bellied plovers, with dunlins and sanderlings have wintered over. In mid-April a rare lone dowitcher or two, white stripe splitting its back between its wings, might "stitch up" the sands, probing deep for worms, leaving soon to breed, returning in July from Cree lands up near Hudson's Bay. Indeed, these northern lands are sister to Monomoy. The tundra is similar to this small isle. Many of the birds which stage here end up in one of the most productive areas in the world, at the top of the planet – or at its ice capped navel, depending on your point of view in flight, in tundra bog.

Now the few black bellies are joined by larger flocks which stream across Nantucket Sound from the land of the Incas. These almost crow-sized birds may be told by the black under their "arms," and the "s" of black they create on the sands as their bellies contrast with their pale backs. Their call is high, whistling, the essence of "plaintive." Terns flash their offerings of sand launces to prospective mates; fly in circles in tern-typical threes.

By Memorial Day (when lilacs bloom ashore) migration is in full burst. The horseshoe crabs are laying their eggs under full moons. Clasped in groups of two and three, they lumber. Stripers, snappers, shad, mackerel, abundant, with bluefish to follow. Black-bellied plovers have been followed by the brick-colored breasts of birds their size, the red knots, gentle and relatively stately ("wahquoits," Forbush says they were Indian called, so explaining the name of various Cape flats where they crowded in the thousands once.) Many shorebirds, including semipalmated sandpipers, sanderlings, dunlins, turnstones, dowitchers, and semi-palmated plovers arrive. By May the full assortment of common, roseate and least terns have assembled. Do tern things, tuck their wings in, look at their feet. Sit in serene, well-defined shapes, in neat orderliness, near each other.

Summer – Roses and Chicks

Horsehead seals galumph down strands of sand near the Moys, the big males almost twice the size of the females. Some practice mating. Some of the females may be pregnant.

Some of the hordes of shorebirds heading north by June have left, in somewhat the order in which they had arrived. Salt spray rose and Hudsonia flash and flare pink and saffron on the bare skin of the secondary dunes. The Hudsonia will pass as quickly as a butterfly, the roses will uncurl their petals, mixing the scents with those from odd reddish grasses redolent with vanilla, the Hierochloe odorata of Holy grass in the high salt marshes, all summer long; while on the outer beach's dunes, the not unpleasant, mildly acrid scent of an after match of gull guano mixes with dried sands. The roses are the smoke and flame; the guano, the after flash.

While many egrets and herons stay, the blue heron tends to leave to nest elsewhere. Disturbed terns in the sandy flats fly up over your heads, kekk and keeer disconcertedly and dive bomb you in hordes as they attempt to nest. Gulls are often already feeding their furry, flightless young up by the dusty miller. Passing them upland towards the dunes, they arise and speak their "worra worra" over and over again.

Roses stay in bloom. Various wildflowers blossom such as gerardia, germander in wet edges; beach peas edge the dunes in delightful tendrils.

By early summer many of the nesting birds we have spoken of above, have courted and built their abodes, laid their eggs: willets, oystercatchers, passerines, some harriers. (Notably egg laying can occur from early spring through summer.) Many are already fledging their young. If the terns have been lucky, they too are feeding whole, small fishes to their young. An occasional eagle stirs up the gulls, as they mound up onto the blue skies, quirkily speaking in a code which, a friend of mine says "they change whenever anyone begins to figure it out."

Way offshore, shearwaters and petrels nip into ocean lips, pluck out food.

By around July 4 the terns' chicks which have survived are fluffy, while many tern couples are trying for their second brood. The return by various shorebirds from fast breeding in the limited sun of the arctic circle, where the prolific insects of the area supply eats, may start as soon as eight weeks after arrival on tundra. According to the USF&W's 1988 Environmental Assessment Plan for Monomoy, dowitchers open the return migration in July's first week, which peaks mid-August, continues through September: "Monomoy is one of the few stops made by the Hudsonian godwit between Hudson's Bay and South America." Stopping on Godwit's bar, they nibble crustaceans on their return from Canada to Argentina. (A three-decade old article proves that some things stay the same, from generation to generation.) They view us. By July and August more southward returning shorebirds arrive, some lingering through fall, like dunlin and sanderling; some in plumage no longer bright with stomach and shoulder colors of breeding enticement.

Fall – Fleabane, Ducks and Peregrines

At the change between high summer and fall, on the south, the purple salt marsh fleabane signals the band of time before the final announcement for last call before winter is made by the cognac-gold of goldenrod. The sow-thistle heads have turned to fur. The bromegrass fluffs, the sparse marsh elder and groundsel show ruffs. Willows slain by heron droppings, bayberries unable to grow anymore near the ponds, have been prematurely bare. Now cherries and shadbushes and plums drop their leaves. Bare, strident, inked branches scribble. The soft pods, the hard branch, are made more pointed here on an isle where there is less than on land.

In the distant past, eels which had been found at tidal mouths in March, through summer, by fall were heading out to spawn, though some would stay and could be dug out of banks all winter long to be taken by bundles in pots, even as two-year-old salmon would pass them running up in to fresh water to spawn. Smelt too would head inland to estuaries and up freshwater. And now?

Some local nesters ready themselves for migration south, such as snowy egrets and the summer nesting ducks, willets, oystercatchers. By September the chunky, speckled, brown whimbrels, looking like some ancient insignia of the Crusades, pass at tree height over the north's glasswort in the low marsh turning to crimson from its green edible summer fingers; downcurved bills fluting mournfully at dusk. In early fall, sea lavender blooms in the pannes, complementing the Salicornia (glasswort) with a regal mix of color. The salt grasses begin to turn tawny from green, before their winter rougedness.

By September, shorebird migration of at least 25 species has peaked.

On those nearby strands of sands, named colloquially miniMoy, thousands

of roseate terns will stage for their drama of a return to South America, in fall. The rest of the terns stage to leave by August-September. Juveniles practice diving. By October, terns have disappeared. The whales, too, are following. A fall burst of plankton begins to die off.

Fall is a good time for increased drama of raptors, juvenile owls, eagles. Hawks pass overhead. Kestrels hover. By October 8 through 13, the peregrines will plunge over the place; looking at me when I speak to them, circling down to investigate.

The sounds change. The sea sound replaces the nesting gulls. The sea sharpens its rough huffing.

Rare golden plovers may more easily be seen in their delicate, scaled, tawny plumage; once abundant, arrive, wistful, slender versions of the black bellies, in autumn. In the fall their delicate, scaled, tawny plumage mellows with the dusk colors of that time of year. Missing are the hordes of staging golden plovers, Eskimo curlews from the past. Fledged young owls may be seen roaming over the crepuscular skies.

Ducks and geese leave later than the shorebirds, as pterodactyl-like, great crested cormorants of winter arrive low over the skies. The pothole ponds, the "pehinska" (Lakota for tall grasses, somehow an onomatopoeic word I like) of them, hiding the first view of vibrant ducks are for me fall. (Ducks and raptors pass in spring migration as well, but this time is for me, their time.) The colors of fall in red and orange and gold leaves and berries are mirrored in the russets and blacks and whites and greens of the ducks assembled in such exciting numbers here.

Winter – Seals and Snowy Owls

The honk of geese is the signal it has been from the land of the Cree to the lands of the imagination, forever. Some Canada geese will linger on the uplands through the winter. Brant geese will check in. Now eider in white and black and scoter in black with some white, common loons in ancient stripes, pass offshore, with oldsquaws, red breasted mergansers, buffleheads, serene and mystical goldeneye, marked with a tear and with black and white lattices on their backs as if to grow unseen flowers, speaking the oddest tone when they feel unobserved.

The bluefish and stripers will swim farther offshore. Many fish are moving into deeper waters; some leave the creeks for the seas; while some retreat up or down into warmer embayed, or brackish waters; others burrow into mud.

Many mollusks will die off or migrate: retreat to subtidal mud. Worms, crabs leave for deeper waters more consistent in temperature, or burrow into mud, sometimes migrating down beneath the water line. Winter flounder show up in shallow waters.

Wolf spiders retreat into their burrows for the winter. In fresh waters, the few toads will go to mud also to overwinter.

By Thanksgiving gannets searingly plentiful plunge into offshore waters. White with black wing tips for the adults, brownish for the juveniles; passing down from Bonaventure in Nova Scotia. Jaegers may still blow in; so may fulmars and skuas, even as pilot whales migrate closer to shore. The bayberry sets its buckshot-like, scented fruits. Brant geese (once much more plentiful) may linger on beach shores.

The sea begins to hoot like an owl in sorrow. The winter sea will gnaw at the land, eating out a sharp chunk of beach. The eider bob, the scoter streak; the oldsquaw whiz, even as the cod mate.

Overwintering ducks on ponds may be mallards, blacks.

Black crowned night and blue herons huddle in their tree roosts. Some winter shorebirds may be the Rockette-like, tidal flat pecking, whitened sanderlings (these do not stay during breeding season but are seen year round arriving and leaving at varied times), the bleached out dunlins, a few Black-bellied plovers, their underarms still dark.

Some other year-round residents may tuck up here in winter - House finches, chickadees, Yellow-rumped warblers, Savannah sparrows, Horned larks, flickers, the rare Shorteared owl. Bobwhite, harriers, Bald eagles, Red-tailed hawks may be seen at any time of year, though eagles are rare in spring and winter. Merlins, peregrines with the incredible heavy-winged accipiter of the far north the black phase or white phase gyrfalcons, their counterparts, the Snowy owls, may be rare and exciting winter visitors.

In the deeps of cold, Snowy owls may land here every five years or so, when lemmings are scarce in the Arctic. This place is about as close to their home turf as they can find in this area, save for Plum Island on the north shore of this state. To see a beach in ice glow forth with golden eyes within a thick, self-contained mound of white feathers is something indescribable in visitation from the spirit world, a world which knows connections between sea and sky, land and star, we can only scarcely imagine or remember in the pulse of our denatured genes.

Mammals are year-round residents. In winter, the jumping mouse, as mentioned, will hibernate in dry areas, to emigrate to wetter ones in April when it emerges. Shrews tunnel deeper in cold weather, but may begin their prolonged copulatory activities, mating up to 20 times a day in special dens in January. (Maybe I'll come back as a .....) Muskrats may breed in late winter. Voles usually cease copulating in winter. White footed mice spend a lot of time with their families in their nests, come out under full moons to nibble berries, such as bayberries, still left on branches.

Seals are the Winter prize, however – hauled out on sand strips. The harbor

seals jovially haul out with the horseheads. Some of the latter, which may have summered here, now may be joined by more of their kind.

While it is recently discovered by the Center for Coastal Studies that some of the important animal and perhaps some plant phytoplankton is alive throughout the year, north of Monomoy in Massachusetts Bay, enough to feed wintering Right whales, most of it dies off in winter, even as some of the fairy shrimp and daphnia of freshwaters which have changed their shapes increase.

In early spring it all begins again with the rush of detritus into tidal creeks, the intensification of light and heat – and the snow crystal-like diatoms proliferate. The plant plankton swells to feed the millions of tiny animal planktons and it is all the ground base for the symphony of waters, the instrumentation for virtually every being mentioned of fishes and whales.

The guard changes; animals emerge; life begins to celebrate the vast heated wings.

This calendar was observed and written in the mid-1980s-90s. Things are changing. Climate Change the villain creates sea level rise, changes in landform, storms of more severity. The warming climate in the far north, changes nesting shorebirds' nourishment, creating "mismatches between arrival of shorebirds and availability of their invertebrate prey." (https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/arcticshorebirdadaptation.htm)

False springs create confusion for plants in many areas of the globe, causing false or early flowering and throwing off insects as well as seed and fruit production. Birds are migrating earlier. According to Phil Kyle, birding expert reporting in the Cape Cod Times, November 13, 2018, "sanderlings, red knots and ruddy turnstones (birds seen in mid-spring, late summer and early fall on Cape Cod) failed to breed this year in Greenland, one of their major nesting areas on the east coast, due to record snow cover. These weather extremes are primarily due to climate change and in the past have been dismissed. Now it's hard to ignore." The Times further reported that in September of 2018, no juveniles were seen in migration past the Cape by Dr. Larry Niles of ruddy turnstones, semipalmated sandpipers, sanderlings, dunlin, short-billed dowitchers, and the critically endangered red knot.

Climate change affects not just shorebirds, although they receive dire results; we know from the diminution of the iconic polar bears, mammals too are at risk. Even as I write this a pair of tufted titmice (breeders from March to May) are examining a nest box out my window in this warmer than usual winter day in January 2023. (How Climate Change Will Affect Massachusetts's Birds | Audubon)

Perspectives

It is essential to remember that we are limited in our view of the world by our feet. Although we fly in planes, travel in cars, we can never seem to understand

how little the birds and whales and caribou can make pieces of the world by compacting huge areas with their modes of motion: swimming, flying, running. To a whale, the earth may be as small as a few islands in a big lake. To a bird, the earth may be as tiny as the compression of time by flight, enabled by metabolic energy, can make it.

Animals on migration are like tribesmen on migration up and down watersheds of the past. If a piece of their seasonal habitats are destroyed, the whole spiral is destroyed.

Monomoy is a blot, an islet of Langerhans, a corpuscle which supports the release of streams of flying creatures in their longitudinal ribbons, as other places in the world do. As other shores of the world send streams of nourishment out to the interlinked seven seas, from the Arctic tundra to the mangrove swamps of the south Americas, so does this tiny place. Cut out the flesh and blood and salt and water of any one of these places and damage to the tissue is done. The electrolyte balance of the organism is insulted, Gaia hurt. The well-being is assaulted.

It is essential to remember that just as seasons are linked to total environmental storehouses (with scientific names such as seres, biomes, habitats, ecosystems) which react to cold, hot, wet, dry within fences, so too, individual creatures are linked to seasons and habitats. They are not then totally "free" as some naturalists have noted but they do have a real liberty within parameters of subsistence, within an existence.

Make ruin of man and by man and everything suffers. Make ruin of creatures and man suffers. Disrespect to rocks and creatures and grasses leads to disrespect for man. Disrespect for man leads to disrespect for the flesh and bones and breath of earth. To commercialize the universe is to make mere waste products of every living organism, "four legged, two, winged or rooted."

Perspectives

I can come into it from the sea, awash in the heights of seabirds, see it as an isle beneath me, as a convenient metaphor for a planet; I can come into it awash in the planetary constellations of whales, the starry galaxies of fish. I can boat to those banks and shoals which are a land of their own, which, instead of releasing me to an ether where I am both godhead and completely controlled, may let me love the earth all the more. The edge by the sea may let me sleep warmed by a lantern and hearth. The very salt and sweat of imagery I can let into my life may mediate between me and destructive behavior. I can roll with the clouds of whales and become a planet.

If I make myself see as a whale, out of the large corners of my small eyes, what will man be like? If I make myself see as a bird from the space above, what will his works elicit?

If I am the flesh and blood of the world, who am I then, and what are my concerns? If I am the endangered isle, how then may I protect myself?

Cycle

From an area 3/4 of a mile wide with knolls and meadows, to an area whereby the 1930s, the outer beach disappeared, the breakers "chewed away" a place which in 1964 has a meadow which is yet washing away with a beach narrowing.

Gloom bars of cloud and cold and winter push their gales into the sands, break them off. Summer swirls up sands from the areas below the land's edges, pushing them back onto shore.

"Still it is a peculiarity of this and some other localities, that what is lost in one place is gained in another."

The Power of Positive thinking in geological terms.

Matter is neither created nor destroyed. (Only defiled.)

The seas do not make the world larger but smaller, if I see as a right whale. The globe is not limitless, but finite, if I see as a petrel. The bits and pieces we call habitats, nations, continents, islands, are components of a single entity, interstrung like fiber and electric nerves, like sinew and soul.

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Heart History
Cultural Evolution and the War Between Man and Nature

Some thoughts inspired by the place

Between 1984 and 1994 I was obsessed with the war between man and nature, the cultural evolution which led to that war and to complex societies/civilization, and the pitfalls of so-called civilization. Monomoy helped me think, and its own history reverberated within my own personal one, as I wondered about the nature of history. My thoughts were in waves, more like verse, with a circularity which I later discovered was close to indigenous thought ways. This is some of what came to mind.

I Am The Marsh, "Animal Dreams"
(What was it like to become an animal in these places?
What was the nature of Place?
How can I become like unto the marsh?)

I fell asleep and as a harrier I flew, looking down at the lands. Wondering where the vole was that I saw yesterday curled up under a clump of beachgrass. I see him tunnelling under the grasses, now nibbling at their bottoms.

I am not hungry enough to descend. My face, like an owl's, is round, a disk to catch all the sounds in. This ocean drums. Other hawks shadow the space above me, broad winged hawks, a sharpie or two; extend their wings, flap, soar off to travel to land farther on, to mate in spruce trees or to settle upon their blotchy white eggs, to feed the young, even as I would soon do.

(Niches, man said. Everything had them. Zones of possibility from the sea to the uplands, as ordained to limits by adaptation as were colors in the spectrum, bands of frequencies.) Fiddler crabs lurk in the mud at the edge of the marsh, or in the salt marsh tidal banks. Now the tide subsides, breathes. I am a fiddler crab perceiving the shadow of harrier coming towards me, like a bomber jet. He is not terrifying to my armor. I wave my claw. Looking up under the long

marsh grass spears, some broken by the tides, some still flourishing, I come out of my slanted burrow to dip myself into the rising tide, catch enough water to moisten my gill-lung, to keep that air chamber able to breathe for a good part of the day. I am pulled out of my home then by an inner momentum as urgent to me as hunger or the need to sleep is to you. I was dark as a new moon in sands, light in the dusk. He would not see me, camouflaged. The shade of the afternoon was bringing the low tide in, slinking in, uncoiling out over the dunes and beyond. The mud felt nice on my hard shell, gloppy, oozy, supporting. As I travelled to the side on my feet, many others would do the same, clattering castanets. Retreating like tide to the sea, we to our burrows when human leg was felt vibrating against the sands.

My big claw waved when a female approached. My little one sifted out the chunks and globules of quartz, chert, feldspar, looking for it-goes-way bacteria, for algae for microorganisms which magnified might have funny shapes: clattery furry claws, shrimp-like bodies. I ejected sand pellets near me as i sought.

On the dune, I am the wolf spider with my eight hairy legs, my ferocious eyes, sitting at the "door" waiting for unwary insects. I too, had a round hole which dipped down for a burrow. But unlike the crabs in the muck, mine was in the dry sands. The rain might puncture here. I had to scan the sky for birds who might take me, full gulls descending, for muskrats who might approach. I waited patiently in the shade of my hole for a shiny beetle for my lunch.

In the cattails of the freshwater marsh, I shuffled my duck body, turned my tail up, dipped my head under, feet and wings moving; looking for small crustaceans, those miniature crablets which just shed their skins and whose crab coats dotted the marsh; junior arthropods taking off their coats many times in their first years, discarding them. I seek insect nymphs squiggling behind their snapping jaws before they break out of their pupae to fly, up out of the skin of water above them, towards the sky. What was the life of a duck filled with in feeling and thought? Was it content after the ducklings were bred? What did the water feel like when you had no naked skin to goosebump up? I sought green pieces of algae and pondweed. Looking down the alley of the creek, the wands of the reeds were so friendly, so warm a shelter where I slept at night. They made such a pleasing sound, delicious creaking and hissing. Muskrat nearby had his caves in the mud bank, moved up to the dunes into burrows there with his oily brown fur. Watching for him when my eggs were laid, lest he eat them.

When my webbed feet ventured on to land, voles scattered under the grasses and reeds. Short-tailed shrews sometimes tunneled about here to the water's edge, pushing their sharp noses out, clicking, chirping, slurping up swimming worms or even minnows, then burrowing back down to where they kept their nest dens; their deep home tunnels a foot sometimes down into sands where they were just damp enough not to cave in.

I was a clam in the flats. Ejecting my sperm into the high tides where it would meet the eggs of another clam, ejected through her siphons. Mating: the spat urge themselves down into the sands, migrating down to a place of their own; growing as they ingest the nutrients filtered out of the tides through their "hoses," putting on calcium carbonate, lime-like rings to their shells, like tree cambium as they grow; growing up even as the nearby lady crabs in this edge of the seas would change their spotted orange/purple shells to enlarge, to swim and to burrow, to scavenge us, to mate, to wander up and down the salty creeks whose water is warm and buoyant as the birth fluid of a human. Tin-colored sand launces dig themselves into the metal sheen of the watery sands near me. Mine is a salty, slicked, seldom dry world here where the thick crusts grew, where the beryl green, ruffled sea lettuce got washed ashore from the edge, from near where the slope of the shelf sustained the upwellings of rich planktony waters.

I was the fluttery small fish. The terns, I could see them above me, sharp wings shaping a cove of light out of the fuming sun and air. I could see them cluster like air shells cutting the lower skies. I could see them too, were I a scallop clinging to the eel beds at the Common Flats, or as if I were an oyster in the mud of a creek mouth. The life of the fish who sought me, like my own, swelled in schools rising and falling with heat and cold, like plankton, rising and falling with night and with day; emigrating offshore and on, into deep or flat water, according to the flux of temperatures – seeking an even degree I could stand, responding on the electric of my lateral line to summer and winter changes, to salt and lack of it. I could live because I knew the fluids out of which I was born. I could see the terns above me, not clearly, but as a watery motion of spiraling light.

I could be a mollusk so low to the ground that each grain of sand was a refracting chunk of a jewel; the grasses were trees.

I could be a tern so suspended on air that the skills of swimming and walking seemed mundane. The grasses below me seemed both limitless and tiny. The sand grains were less than raindrops. Bouncing up on the resistance of invisible air, I was held in a motion which set me apart from the earth on which I sometimes landed to brood my young. But the sharp projectile of a peregrine was a shape I feared. When I sat on the sands, ants, owls could dissect my babies. When I rose with the blood sac of twilight to sleep on the scallops of sea under the moon, nothing came up from below to disturb me.

And then as the season of humanity changed? How could I use this place? Before, I might become it, become like it, disperse from it – I might become murky like the flats, half water half air some fog, lifting; becoming, turning into feathers, I might fly with terns or with hawks, looking back over my shoulder at the gold dust dunes. I might build a number of huts, like muskrat, to breed

many times and to settle in with my extensive furry family. I might be like a wolf spider exposed, predacious, lurking. I might become content like the placid ducks. I might become wealthy with leisure like the clams.

When the men invaded to carry off provisions from us, I might become wily and timid as the vole when the harrier's shadow slung itself low over the marsh. But then I would gather the ducks for feathers, the clams for cash; I might not become but overcome these marshes and flats, to surround them to make them do service for me.

Point Of View

I have consciously chosen a position adversarial to "civilized culture" in order to question it. It is not that I am a total Luddite, dead set against Botticelli or the computer, that would be hypocrisy as I delight in both; rather that I need to use a point of view as a perspective for vision.

In the colonial era, low houses, oxen, candlelight; heavy vessels. Dark seas filled with fish. Heavy sheep wool clothing. Huge hearths. Wide cartwheels, few roads.

But after the heavy large woods were cut, and the vast new fields used up the land; the man-made fields and meadows, the leaner nourishment caused an inevitable streamlining. The 1800s had to go forward, to redefine the difficult necessities, the mechanisms of provision. It had to go forward or return to the camping life of the tribes.

Before the lands were solidified: trees into wood, mud into bricks, sand into glass – grass into flesh; flesh into commodity; before a need for ease and comfort, release from labor, increased – tribes could still roam, side by side with the settlers, whether here or in the bison filled west. But when the salt boxes staked out too much land, driving away game in favor of domesticates in plants and animals, the Indians were limited, facing shortages.

Out west, when the ranch houses dotted the land, the radical new barbed wire fenced off grazing land for bison, antelope, elk and the rails divided the migration routes, the Indigenous could ask the white men to come back to a basic and satisfying life way. A few, like John Tanner in the east, like the mountain men of the west, would concur, but most were already too committed to the intricacies, comforts and variety of their civilization to want the open and inward life of the tribes. A house and its furnishing, oxen, horses, cotton and silk and wool clothes, bedding, meant more to them than an elegant simplicity. The stimulus of material variety was tempting. The ability to provide one's own stimulus, to harvest, build, fish, create a living art within the beauty of the seasons and their habitats, within the habitat of the inward soul, was waning.

Before populations of cows and of humans displaced the originals, there might have been a time to change.

I will say "they do not know what is dissolving them from contentment." I mean the involvement in an active life in the fullest sense. Participation, not just in culture, but in the nature and the community, the full community of men with each other with women with family with earth, which gives humans life, vivifies us.

Complex culture – I will not say "highly evolved" because I believe that ancient tribal cultures may be more highly evolved in terms of civilized and competent human behavior than the urban stage which may be a devolution – can bring contentment when you are performing a task you like, have enough food, a pleasant abode, material goods which please your sense of aesthetics, a community, a spiritual life, an imaginative and an intellectual life. Culture can provide knowledge, can provide art. But natural culture has all of these also. Many of the societal constructs in which urban culture exists now and historically for the past thousands of years have deprived us of participation in nature, in each other; of the exercise, literally, of arms, body, minds, imagination, vision, personal and communal skill.

Mix then, a hybrid possibility, where many (that old word) "lifestyles" are possible and could exist side by side in a combination of the delights of complex "civilizations" with natural ones.

Art, spiritual life, knowledge exists as a part of the flesh of survival in natural cultures, green cultures. Variety, art and knowledge, technical shortcuts, exist in highly complex cultures. If some love mountain, lantern and mist, others love electricity and cars and supermarkets, how can we say, this is not your pleasure, or should not be?

If the colonial life would be the ultimate in aesthetic pleasure for some, with its perfect farmhouses, manses and ships, if the medieval would be ideal for others, the modern era with its flow of goods the ne plus ultra for others, still others flourish in the excitement of a wide open, spacious lifeway. As anthropologist Ruth Benedict pointed out many years ago, there are as many cultural norms for a pleasurable life as there are kinds of personas. No single one is "correct." It is a tragedy when a culture is lost which might be the one presenting a livable paradigm for humans after their destructive cultures have dissolved. Like floral or genetic refugia, cultures, when made extinct, limit the options of adaptability for man.

If you love one and not the other kind of culture, if you cannot live without the automatic devices which seem to give you pleasure, at least limit the destructive capabilities of your delights. Should one live by depriving the other culture of existence, both lose. That they, the many, live allowing the full expression of human

and other creatures' excitement would be ideal. Balance then, the culture of primary sufficiency, the oral tradition, the symbolizing and deft, enduring culture, with the worker-handy culture, the technical culture; the visionary internalized society with the one which manifests, externalizes in literal ways, its arts and knowledge.

Is there room enough on the island, is there still time?

Above

This brash barrier beach was then truly a spit, spitting in the eye of the gods of seas. The tremendous force of sea, washing, pushing over slender treeless sand-wafer, carved by winter cold and crashing waves, created its ephemeral defiant human history as surely as it dominated its natural scene. These forces beat out its human history even as they made its animal and plant and rock history.

Seen from above, this islet seems merely a wisp, something the sand literally spit out. It is amazing that this puddle, this thin spill, this wafer in communion with the "wine sea" and the spiritual air, holds any life at all. Amazing that below, sand and saltmarsh, dune and freshwater sculpt places in which ducks may nestle, beetles survey, mollusks (the lowly and meek) sift salt water. This satisfies me because here is an appropriate if obvious comparison to the whole planet. Seen from above, how fragile a swirl of thin lands it is, like oils mixing in an end paper of an old book; how miraculous that life has formed out of the areas of soil into the sands of deserts, the marshes of tundras, the forests of rain and of snow, and that the seas squiggle and tumble with life. How miraculous and how precarious. Perhaps the whole of the earth might be named Wreck Cove.

The litany I learn on this small place applies to the largest, even to the whole earth.

Even more cosmically satisfying is that the matter here was neither created nor destroyed but recycled here like time itself. But we humans can choose some of the forces which shape and reshape our lives. Not that we have control over them; still, we can preserve some element of involvement in our own destinies. The island could not. It was passive, a recipient of natural and human deeds.

Now then, let me pull my scoop net together. My purse seine should pull in its harvest.

Imagery, subjective response; my own history as a reaction to the times I am in; local history, culture – the world of heat and of cold, the ancient tribesmen and their visions, the moderns – the net should weave itself together.

The sea air is neither rain nor salt nor water, but something in between. It

aerates the soul, gives a mind perspective, is calming, makes for energy, a wish for a warm dry place, creates hunger. Now there is shade over the exposed areas of high dunes. Shade because of the green fog. A sheltering forest of fog. If Chatham makes the fog (the old woman had told me, wiry in her boniness, still good looking), Monomoy is the mitochondria, the factory. Heat and cold, merging over the edges of the island, drifting in from the northern colder seas, being consumed by the softer southern seas, equaled fog. In another context it could equal hurricane. Hurricane was a kind of deceit of rage masquerading as tranquility, and like all deceits, as other writers had observed, it created violence.

Here there seemed two modes of bodily response: either the chill contraction of damp skin, or that hot, salty, sticky, yellow warm sandy sweat of a balmy day.

I may use this place in order to see.

As A Manomoiyck

Thick salty fleshly scent:

I will perceive time as the indigenous might have. For generations this bar of sand changed, moving like smoke. Time-Indians looking seaward to the barrier beach in Champlain's epoch had seen it as theirs, fluxing and flowing. The flexes and extensions of pieces of sand into islets and marsh had a context of suns and moons, of generational time. For generations we planned the same celebrations and anniversaries, linked to the copious comings and goings of fish and fruits. For time after time we saw our fathers in the past, our sons become the future; all fade into a continuous milky way of a line, brighten like a heavenly body amassing light. The attachment to ancestors, to spirits beyond the particular time and flesh, was fluid, easy. Something could change and its recollection be handed down from father to son in a connected piece of generation.

An islet was no more than a piece of flesh of the human and animal continuum, of the spiritual continuum. The cedar swamps, inlets, had been theirs; the marshes, the cattail swamps, the varied waters were as much a part of the flesh and being as human relatives. Legend, that is, the actions of family and band through time within nature, had come and gone and each place could speak of an ongoing hook into the past; continuous lines: even the minnows had ancestors. The short-eared owl, his parents before him had swept these sands. The ants and beetles had waddled line after line from a past.

Natives looked out at the motions of these sands. It was place which equaled time. A long period of time; their history through generations of gatherings. A time and place, a continuity which lasts like the sea itself. Must have seemed eternal until the entry of a culture which made change of every decade.

For generations we used our hands with a variety of skills, in a variety of

environments and times and weathers, to produce a variety of material needs immersed in a quotidian artistry, wrapped in the seasons.

Then a new history devolved. One which used the environments and the seasons differently.

Once a response to time and the seasons, to the greenery of flats and of forests, the subduing force of sands – the wealth of salt waters, changed, male character, history itself changed. Once habitats and the activities they sponsored were made singular, human history became also a response to itself, not just to the limits of weather and sea, of wetness and dryness and of seasons.

The results of civilizations are universal from the earliest to now: eroded lands, silted waters; toxic waters, disease. Eco-historians proved that lead poisoning from plumbing pipes in Rome affected the mental health of that culture, even as Mesopotamian cattle eroded the oases into desert. Cultures using less last longer, even with large populations. But even then, an uncomfortable tension between militarism and agricultural tranquility may still exist, which jars the stasis. Inevitably materialism, coming from whatever source motivates it (whether power or pleasure), or handedness itself born from a brain under human or environmental stress, or access to materiel itself, or a loss of spiritual mystery and power – becomes its own engine, its own raison d'etre. Materialism's handmaiden mechanism may come to the fore when cultures need labor-saving devices, or artifacts for expansionist or turf-defending wars. Constructs of ranked societies break from the hold of the center, to escape in rebellion or expansion, via emigration. Civilization always leads to the despoilation of the flora and fauna and rocks, to despotism over humans. Materialist cultures always empty out the earth and the inner imagination to construct over societies a hollow and brittley breakable shell.

As An Original

Manamoyicks (men and women, natural humans, aboriginal inhabitants, indigenous people, Indians, primal man, the descendants of the first paleo men here) would respond to the nature here as a bounty to be gathered in its season: shellfish through the warm weathers from spring to fall; whales beaching in fall; shorebirds gathering in May and July; ducks passing through all year with geese, intensifying their numbers in spring and fall.

Capaciously gentle men, able to care for each other: a species capably living beyond the limitations of many of the people who arrived here to delimit sexuality and inner vision, even as they contracted for delimited land, embarrassing earth with their endless material requirements, might have looked on the newcomers with amazement: Why make a home in a place in the raw winter, merely to serve alcohol, when you could return inland? Why

sell thousands of fish in return for cash to buy oil for your lamps when you could eat the fish and burn their oil yourself? Why invent what you do when life is more than good?

The tribesmen might have wondered at a group which stayed in one place: seeing humans feeding tame animals on grasses on land which they ultimately chewed up, the green becoming hot sands; using domesticated animals when they could hunt what was wild; seeing the flux of wingeds, the rush of deer diminish; seeing men staying in one place to thus deprive themselves of the options of seasonal motions – exposing themselves to storm and to flood, even to this oppression of light, with no escape back to the mainland forest shade. An original American might have wondered at the enforced pummeling of the settled man; after all, were he mobile he could move out of harm's way. He might also wonder at the willful placing in harm's way men did to themselves when they took to sea in small, curved homes, unable to return to shore in an emergency. Watching the lighthouse, and the sudden changes of sun to storm, the ships beyond – how strange to expose yourself in a ship, its prisoner – to the winds and possible death, to other men's wills, to garner a treasure of material goods which seemed non-essential, which took man away from love and from variety in earthen beauty.

How odd it must seem to reap the animals and their fish in order to sell them to make money to buy what had always been for free; watching them fish obsessively, piling up fishes for sale. Watching them pile up rye, barley, corn and slaughtered animals for sale. More than collecting otter of beaver hides for barter at trade posts, this was collecting for sale, everything. Putting out of order what had been in order. How strange to use up the woods for grasses, to use up the grasses, the seas so there was little left to eat, and you had, ultimately, to depend on trade for your food.

Fluid human animals who could use motion, like the fox or the wolf, to change from one area to another, need not become a single character like unto solely the wolf spider or fiddler crab or snake, could be sweet in the bounteous shade of forests, or harsh as sand and heat. Could change. Then Western Man who chose to stay in one place and become like it, came to put himself in precarious positions, locking up the land, sea, skies to increase his holdings.

They defined success differently.

I was not romanticizing. I knew Tribal cultures had attacked those who possessed something they wanted: grain or water or hunting land even as so-called Civilized cultures would attack from their strongholds. This was a universal throughout the earth. But Tribal cultures of North America were prepared to give each other in the community some strength while it seemed civilized cultures often lived by sapping everyone of strength. (The rare

assembly of the generous within societies find ways to merge their strengths with one another, rather than to feast on each other's vitality.)

But I did know there were different choices. That as an original in North America I would not invade expansively; there would be something softer because of the cooperative creed, the sharing and inclusive ways of my breed, less obsessively preoccupied with turning everything to commodity for cash, more occupied with survival in its chosen-for (or inevitably positioned by outside influences) phase of cultural evolution. I mightn't need to go on to an era of agriculture as a specialized commodity, along with hand crafts, tools, war let us say; not need to go to industrialism. I might adapt to colonization, create a synthesis of my old ways with that of the invaders…

When art was life, life, art, one had no need for art, per se. Art, per se, happened when life could not give us what we wanted; it was the dream substitute for dissatisfying reality, or the enhancement and capture of a momentary satisfaction.

If we are living in basics, Lakota, Crow, something new, does it matter that we will never know of Greece, of Athens of Babylon, or can we intuit that all men live in many respects, the same? Can we know from our own history, the rumors and stories of the past Hopewell, Natchez, Mesoamerican cultures, that it is the same, over the world – a progression out of Eden and into the gold of complex societies? How much information shall we take with us in the retreat to the future?

We refused to see that economies like natural pieces of the earth are linked to earth (though economists such as Jospeh Stiglitz try to warn us). History (as taught in school in my era) divorced itself from the earth which bore it, from the events which knit it into a web. Narrowing our learning into grids, even as we were more and more tied into them, we would never see anything but a square on a map. We needed to get out on the ground and examine what had happened, how, and why. But we remained by choice, blind.

Spring – March 17, 1994

The dry scent of sand, the arctic cold, the clear sea smell, told me I was there. The ritual of return made me content. The sand bars were closing in from Harding's Beach all the way to Morris Island. Boats barely made it through the Stage Harbor cut. Mussel dredgers hauled out beyond, between. The flats were a comforting mess. Across the way, the dunes of my isle swept progressively higher towards their middle, peaking in curves like tidal waves heading east. A rare rough legged hawk, huge, hovered to locate rodent eats on migration. I inhaled and my breath rose to hover with him. Four young deer with their fringed tails popped out of the thickets, imitating surf.

Once again, I would be going over to the place.

Just Say No

No, Monomoy was not a place in which to "find your center" or learn to "grow" or "get in touch with your Self" and other accumulated imitator-talk, the lingo of people who had abdicated their thought processes for slogans. You could do all that with a self-help book.

People speak a great deal about the self, getting in with it, yet they have no idea what a self is: to them it is an immediate ingredient in the fast world of alienated consumerism, cut off from anything but its own desires and fulfillments. This is not a self. A self is something that understands its being- in atavism- a self is something which proceeds from nature and history; a self is something whose soul must bear other souls in cooperation. (A self is something which those who do not have one, as a magical man in my childhood, "Wooden Cup," told me, will try to take away from you.)

If you bring me the self, it is the link in you to me, to the past, to nature; the self in community, in nature, in tradition. Only in that respect did Monomoy or any other place of solitude inspire the self to know its parameters better.

Nor was the fabled place in its "original state." As a place of constant week by week, season by season, habitat by habitat change, albeit within certain organic parameters – as a place which had lived intimately with tribal humans in its "original" postglacial changes, as well as with flora and fauna – as a place which had served historical and natural processes, this was an elitist or at least academic ecological delusion, like keeping it under pressed glass. Keep the "wild," make sure the humans are excised from the integration with it in even non-destructive ways. Keep it "original." Before sin. Keep it specialized, keep it a piece of civilization, like a museum.

We would have nature preserves for those who could afford them.

Nature could be bought and sold as big business by those who had conserved it after exterminating her original inhabitants; it was another manipulable commodity. The high-handed, arrogant corporate nature organizations' commandants could use and misuse the gentle and sincere lovers of earth within their ranks. A new breed of nature journalist claimed that they could understand the earth without even being able to camp in her. If they spoke of nature and the outdoors without even being able to live for a few weeks gracefully amongst her, their words then and the devices with which they sold "nature" were not sincere, were a pose, an art and artifice, an artifact with which to steal a bit of light from the beautiful, like Hecate with a moon stealing light from the impervious sun – to use nature as another consumer item for jaded souls.

Sitting on the porch of the abandoned shack, finally able to take my time, not rushed to count birds, able to collect my thoughts like bushels of beach plum blossoms or fish starting in lightning rips or pebbles of peeps, at least in a

memory or in an imagination, I could pretend to camp here for weeks on end (as I had in fact done for real on another coast for months) until time melted away, and the voice in me turned to a sea of a different rhythm. I could use the warm feathery day to think.

Once a response to time within the season, history eventually became a response to itself.

The villeins sheared the castle sheep and were tithed for their rented lands. In the castles' era, the kings cut down the forests, as did the serfs; realizing the lands had changed for the worse, pockets were saved for hunting the royal harts. The wardens kept the woods clear of snags and of poachers. The lands had been progressively denuded, until little wood was left. Little good land was left for yeoman farmer's tenancy after the Middle Ages.

In the new world, men could become freeholders here.

The dunes look like castles made of molten gold. The early time here had known a land which flowed like the sea. Covered in mystery.

Indians at peace with their environment had given unwittingly their abodes to the European colonizer. These colonizers still made a partial pact with the land at first; they fished, lobstered. Incipient technology was still fun, romantic: sailing ships, steamers, beacon lights.

While the mainland Cape indulged a bit more so in the common transpirations of history, Monomoy stayed within the constrictions of natural parameters, engaging in pursuits directly attached to nature: fishing, farming, ship saving, sailing. Before technology connected us with everything – more self-reliant. More provincial perhaps, but closer knit; less intrusion and noise of outside information, less of a superficial connection to events. A pause here before it whisked us away into discrete parcels for the "Natural, Historical, Recreational," before self-reliance had ceded to commercial endeavor.

I walked these islands thinking of the process: questions which had consumed me for years.

How had we evolved out of nature into a culture of pain? How had my own life been affected by that process?

Here then was history. The response to natural circumstance created adaptation, evolution. The response to evolution created character, created history...

Telepathy

I am still crammed with so many images: the whaleboats in the dimmer shadowy age before whale oil candles; whaleboats and schooners pulling to

the shore, a Right whale attached to them. I see the oxen in candlelight, vessels heavy; dark seas filled with whales. I think of how the 1700s relied on the grasses, how the 1800s took from the seas; how the 1900s dunes created vistas for vacationers; how it is too cold to swim there even for the most intrepid lovers of saltwater immersion.

How many dreaming images flood me, as if the ghosts of the past with their worlds in time insist on being seen and seen again.

"Will you write yourself into the history?" a young friend asks.

April 29. Woke up this morning like a duck in marsh grass, content, warm. I am like a sun without gravity to pull its waters, in a place of exposed sun, like the beige sands of Monomoy, or the rumpled and distilled rocks of the Badlands where vistas are defined by space – there are such strong vibes from you, like a too bright sun pulling out my moisture. I am pulled in chaos, like a small planet into the sun's flames, dissolving. I walk two places in my mind: Martin, South Dakota in the Oglala Reservation near Wounded Knee, where grass plumps and rolls in the same way dunes do, dissolving the view, reconstructing it. There are Swainson's hawk wings above me, shading me. I walk also near the high plumes of phragmites, the round rolled sausages of cattails by the wing of a tidal creek, high as the tall grass of the Plains once was.

I stop work to go to lunch where the tide is high, back in Chatham to look out at the island where so much took place. Lo and behold there is your truck. You must be working on the lighthouse.

I see them, at the tip of the old Monomoy where it was attached in the 1900s, walking the new-firming headlands of South Beach as it curved in below the Chatham lighthouse with its red triangular gale warning flags out: Lovers, walking on the beach, enclose a world. It is as much or as little as their sensory equipment, their consciousness will allow for, as rich or as thin. Within the four arms of that intimate exclusion of the rest of the world, the whole of earth process, our ontogeny can occur, the whole of human reaction to nature, the whole procession of events, of gain and of loss.

I wondered if he ever missed the possibility of living off the land which Monomoy had inspired us to discuss, missed the raw energy of the beautiful which could create a family, create vision truer than any word's aspiration; wondered if the smallness of the professional and personal safety for which he had opted he had found less satisfying, much less safe than the "wild" security, the safety which the nomadic and exposed could provide, with all its dangers. Had mankind itself wondered at its tame and settled, indoors choices and felt it had lost its manhood, its womanhood, its real biology? I remembered the island, alight like a butterfly as it snowed where I was, in shadow. (I sought the Owl king as a guide).

Time

What was around for a very long time, what has developed from glacier to grains, has changed. Onshore forest haunts of "wolves and owls" in swamps "somber as deacons" have been cut down. What has time done to the animals who have lost their homes, their chance at reproduction, their place in the seasons because of man?

Nausets who danced at deer-dun dune cliffs on the mainland – I saw them before the archeologists discovered their digs – saw them dancing over the surf – may have come and gone up stream and down here in the summers, come to calm in warm spells in winter when the platinum flats unfroze, existing in a timeless zone before western history made minutes out of transitions, dammed up time with change. What took thousands of years to savor, itself was not cut into hours, as habitats too were cut and mixed, folded into the leaven of economic loaves.

I walk here, singing jazz beats and nonsense lyrics with my young friend, adorning myself with horseshoe crab head-dresses, whelk egg case necklaces, sea wrack hair; giggling like algae stroked by surf. I wanted to dress myself in the place, to become it. I did not want to partition it off (as I did not want to partition off realms of the Lakota's plains or of terns' proximal sands) like a living zoo. Because things made separate, compartmentalized on shelves became dead, dead as television. I wanted to be organic, this and the season and the sky and the place. Organic, timeless, thus. The tidal stink, the din of shrieking birds; I wore the pink bacteria of the cut of the tidal rivulet on my arm.

The new man partitioned off his process from the ground and groundedness. He looked up at art, at embodiment concretized, forgetting the insubstantial caught in a shadow or a fetish.

He thought of spirit as something with the dead. The past knew it as alive. Between the alive and the dead, the visionary and the real, between times, over times, something eternal as ocean took the best, the liquid and solid, the fog and the flesh, from all ages.

I had waited; and gone back home within. I used this motile storming place to stay me.

It had brought me back to a vision.

In spite of all. (I could hook a tradition into it, as an adopted land beneath my feet.)

Earth had made humans into themselves; those who lived with her were giving. The sound of feather against wind, against skeleton against star against sand, against sea-sough...demanded an animate being, a listener.

I may bend to plow my fields, I may bend to set my snares, to fish, may bend flat backed or on my knees for clams. Littered with light, a rainbow around the sun, a gem in its ring to the side, I am a supplicant to the saved land, sense a liberation lost to calculated choice. Regret, does he? Do you? In your safety which is so precarious?

The clammers bent like supplicants in the last light, scooping up strands of melted stuff...asking for something else, a memory of freedom.

The tidal stink, the din of shrieking birds: I wore the pink bacteria of the cut of the tidal rivulet on my arm.

Chanting. The moonlight and sand cast something over here. Under the moon, out from history, from old world to new, using the past and the future, nature and culture, only without ego. From the misunderstanding, jealousy and slander, from usurpation and all manner of evils, something would emerge anew.

Fall

All places of holy wildness conserve a mystery for the soul.

I awaken, human animal, emerge, shed from summer. Summer's husks and pods, those seams are splitting open on the dehiscence of the coming equinox, releasing the fluff of her bedding – literally stealing back the seeds which would reproduce: the woolly remnants of flowers gone by, the down of rushes and herbs, used by mice and spring birds for their nests (both here and on the mainland.) The spore of the past, recent and distant, is released.

Sky turned over, pink into white into blue into hydrangea – a scene designed by the gods – huge, diffracted dragonfly wings through the color: daytime into nighttime, time into dream – and dream in turn was rereleased into time, turned inside out, harvested.

Comes the bird I like well, the raptor of the Cape's past and present tundra lands. Out of the Arctic age of the beige flat north, crisp rain hoary on the grass tips, brilliant in the sun, flies up a harrier, breathing by its appearance, excitement into me; uplifting me, carrying me on into the distance where it disappears, a slim speck of a daytime star.

"My heart is a harrier," I say to a small group of birders assembled on the flat land between the dunes and Godwit Bar.

I had an ancient sacred hunger in the blood to see these raptors migrate. Something atavistic in me craved to be lifted up from earth on their wings. To see out of their eyes, to escape the desert of lovelessness with their flight.

The topaz summer marsh is now apple red with samphire changing from emerald to ruby. At the borders soon it will be painted pumpkin. The bird carries colors of change rusting in her feathers, a hint of autumn oak tannin on

her feathers, fall-molted. Here, in a last orange heat, on its invisible slice and rise, a muted leafy female hawk slants over the marsh, rocks from side to side low in heat haze, its wings up at angles; white rump patch a piece of white as clean as a wave crest. Through the soft fur of the cattails on the south where I have seen them as well, I envision the shift of pale silver crescents which are the smaller males, the thrust of a male dropping food to a mate, her upward lunge as she grabs the energy packet from the air. The air is scented with rose and sea., the creamy green ozone of salt, seaweed and sky.

Near me the glazed skull of a seagull shines. A bit of feather still attached. The gulls' indecipherable noise has lessened as the season of summer has begun to die. Through the harrier (which is in my spirit now), I become the power of what it has ingested, the feather, the bone.

When a hawk appears, when an owl appears, it is a sacred omen. She lets you become the feather and the wing; she lets you fly. By becoming a piece of her and the place, ingested by inhalation, she lets your life be easier, more exalted. If I could give you the place in spirit, as the hawk which uplifts the heart, which creates a blessing by her appearance, I would.

But that would be a violation of the place, and of the hawk. Let it keep itself. No one should possess spiritual property to capitalize upon. Rather become the spirit of the place. Surround you with it, cleanse you with it... And with memory bring back enlightenment, the present redeem a future destroyed.

Each piece a fetish to be blessed with then: the bone and skull, the living water, the owl feathers found; the endurance, exposure itself; cured. From the hawk and the water-light, the brown smelly wrack, and the grey clams, to you. For you and your ghosts were never parted from this here. Lived with the spirit and flesh of everything here, in unity.

I sit within a clump of brushy pines and cherries, shrubs really. Chickadees speak and flit; palm warblers flex tails, attach to trees like toys dangling from a woodcarver's Christmas tree. Safe, orderly, for the most part, Nature – as has been suggested by some – cooperates more than she competes. Storms and violence are not the norm. Even being eaten is not a very often event.

The hawk has everything she needs. She is safe. Does she know she converts the beautiful to another intense dimension of feeling or perception from which freedom alights? Does she need to know?

I sit at the lighthouse. The wind is down. The hawk flies up again, nearer. Skeletal shadow in the backflesh of the sun.

I see in a wash of ice light, a desert.

If I am the flesh and blood of the land, what then are my choices?

Matter here was neither created nor destroyed, but recycled, like time itself. Matter is not created nor destroyed. (Only defiled.)

Concept Of Freedom
Winter:

Image, Shadow And Nightdream

My worries are whether water at the pump will be unpotably brackish or sweet or whether sleep can take me from wakefulness.

The night as I sleep, now outside in my down bag on a plastic tarp, spread itself in its own continuum; its black motion suspended real time. Fistfuls of globule ice stars hang near me. Constellations thick with smooth crystalline roses of quartz near me light my sight.

My spirit in sleep becomes like a bird or a wandering fox, body heavy with fur and feather, the soul lifts into the air, courses, disperses over the dim isle to land. The sea sounds whistle regularly; winds chirp, ruffle their feathers of sea into the sands; wolf down the sun. I could send my spirit on migration here in winter. The winds begin to scream like the mourning spirits of all wronged creatures. I am camping in the raw, hairless flesh of the land. The scents here are icy, not filled with the pine and honeysuckle, rose of land. Scents, like the species of animals, are scarcer now. With no trees here, the night is lightened in its ink by the thin moon. The grasses appear sharp and stubbled, the sand like milk.

The winds push so hard against the brittle moon, they break it into stars which crackle into snows; these descend, metamorphosed into bits of mica in the sands or phosphorescence.

The spirits of Monomoyicks are all over the isle, like star shafts of thin light, wandering quickly. They accompany me out over the flats and into the dunes where the snow owl is alight under the moon. The form of an Indian wearing a blue plaid hunter's shirt goes thin and gaunt as twig and shadow, terse of motion as inner rite. He had come out of the mainland woods to clam before the flats froze entirely. He sat in the blind near the ducks, to hunt. He could feed and shelter his family, cooperate with his peers, assemble, go singly. Be a social or solitary being, build shelter or stay under brush. Maleness had itself. It and femaleness knew a balance rooted in the core of earth. The intensity of being whole within earth lent the heart a sensory openness, which reconnected the spirit to "reality" through the flesh. Freeness was linked to beauty, to natural desire; were both mated with the spirit, with the responsible provider, the creative mate; not attenuated. They took only what they needed. Repaid, earth, sea sky spirit. Honesty ran naked when everyone knew one another. It couldn't hide lies under the clutter of strangers. The animal self which had been by fox taught, this was the independence within earth; this supplied the sensory openness which reconnected flesh to spirit to desire to procreation to provision.

He had the fluidity of seasonal supply which was the essence of security, of freedom. He did not need the comforts of the tame, because he could survive and provide without it. He had his strength, through the use of the hands and was not afraid of storm.

Shadows of the soul: the yellow eyes of the snow owl are crystal planets refracting eras during the day when it is active.

Something alive in the stars and smooth skin of the sky creates an electric route back to the hands through the body, a route back into earth. But what is here now in winter is hoary sand, sand about to be compressed from individual bits of lead and pellets of gold, into sheets of interplanetary metals. Someone is recognizing you and taking you in, taking you to home. To ground. Grass cracks in the cold.

Late Summer

Day, heat, behind the necks of dunes, the lighthouse looms out. The area of the global America here: three masters passed. On the north, the low houses of tenons twisted from the arms of ancient trees, adorned a cold, strange and early time of hearths and taverns as a cloistered new America began to clatter with coaches, to cut its own roots out from beneath its feet and let the whistling sands in like screaming trees.

Offshore, bridges, vehicles, buildings smokestacks threatened to wash the world in a toxic tide.

A mindset would be created, born out of our historic phylogeny, which would set the human heart into an exclusionary, turf defending frenzy. This was not a tribal sense of turf, but a sense of turf proscribed by the precariousness of economic man and everything he could lose. It didn't matter if you created death for profit, as long as your job was safe. As long as your ego had some measure of glory over the other guy.

And up so high, 'til we dropped out of the sky.

Hierarchy had perhaps been broken by the tool of technology and invention. Where there was no land, invention made the money to make success. Now new hierarchies rush into invention's vacuum, vortexed in a rush to the top of the pyramid as the laws of the reality of power proscribe. Use it up, spit it out, protect it. The ultimate global s and m, born from the dominated and the dominating.

Smoking the pipe of visions: We see a group of men obsessed with things; to gain them they translate the flesh of the land into permanent goods, creating impermanence. They trade these throughout the globe. They multiply and move about, move west across our lands. Primary resources are used up. Hyper, we accelerate our machinery and its translation of basic materials into

new goods. Like grazing sheep we repeat our most ancient patterns, with us since Mesopotamia. We use up, we move on. As resources used for intensified production are used up, or do not exist, economies fail. We war over the scraps and the positioning of the scraps. Careless we are with human beings with creatures with the very light of the stars.

As we progressed and we turned the niches of nature into commodity planting, fishing no longer freed us but trapped us by sea and by land. Trapped by seas and by land, using them, we turned against them. Trapped, we became less cooperative with other peers, pinched by our families. Love changed. As we manufactured, we became chained to an earth of dwindling resources. We forgot how to love. We forget the ineluctable links between freedom, love, passion, beauty, earth. As we no longer literally care for each other, affection, desire, concern become Oedipal, constricted, coopted by the cruelty which accompanies a loss of competence. (We loved our prisons.)

We devolve from direct control over our own lives. As man devolves by means of his material ambition from a spiritual natural creature to one of creature comforts, he loses his freedom, his real freedom: Something a few sensitive souls in the curse of the cold-civilized see and sense, something the ancients know.

Inevitable, the themes of civilization since its roots, perhaps since men could store grain. Since men could be caught in hard places. The world patterns were the same when man stopped for whatever reason living by and with the lands and the seasons; lived out of them, attenuated. A fed nation allowed it to expand its trade and its war, its religions; a used-up nation devolved to a feudal specialism. A fed nation allowed its inhabitants to enter other environments for their use. As the lands were eroded, cut down used up mined; as the top of earth was converted to food, and inner earth to material goods; as transport increased – populations diversified and expanded to other lands, to celled places of urban life, around since Mesopotamia and Tenochtitlan. (Technical change, mass production, hand-making factories without machinery had come in anciency, too.)

Some nations were held in stasis, not turning away from agriculture to mechanism; some chose devolution. The Olmec smashed their idols. The Hopi moved away from material corruption towards spiritual purity. Some tropical heat, some inner directive, some beauty, some plenty or cyclic cataclysms had held them in check; some internal glandular balm; some spiritual force which the land itself gave off to hold men back from the meanest and most venal of their motives.

Whether the psychological paradigm, the genetic code, the environmental force, it was inevitable that some place, someone, some time, learned that fuel could make steam for a heat which could move machinery, that stingy hearts

could make a manifestation of themselves in the way they used the world; that irons and metals could be forged for the tools of the mindset which required them in the name of better lives. Inevitable that this be turned to political or personal power in the service of a mindset which itself was as inevitable as a Sophoclean epic.

Perhaps it was that the more men competed with a hard or ugly Nature, competed by constriction in nature with each other's groups, the harsher they became in human nature; the harsher became the environment from overuse; intensified aggression and cruelty became the norm. Materialism, superficiality, and egoism became the displacement activities with which to compensate for the lacks nature and other men caused. Man ran out of beautifulness and gentleness, lost the bear-growling, fir-dark panorama of some spiritual internal which kept him fluid, wet with compassion; lost the golden moon, enough in itself without the temptation of embodiment.

Precarious We Were

Where did this leave us? We had not become liberated, but instead had put ourselves into the hands of objects and of those who sold them, owned them. If we gave up our human powers to the constraints of economic survival and to those who held its power, we gave away our very sanity. Unnatural lives, unnaturally precarious created unnatural behaviors to each other and the earth.

If our economic lives failed us for a moment, for many months, for years, we could not support ourselves with our own two hands, our backs, our feet, our ability to reap food, shelter, and our essentials elegantly from a willing companion of earth. When economic life deserted you, failed you, what was there to turn to? There was no way of providing for yourself and family without land, without fuel on the land, without vegetables and four-leggeds upon the land.

The bottom line of this age is all devouring Economy. The limitlessness of our attenuation from the ground, the balloon in which we dwelt, the pieces of ourselves we used for survival, made us look for grounding in what was often inconsequential fluff as the balloon burst and scatter us.

It seemed to me very simply that the worst aspects of human nature were intensified by the most complexity. The more complexity, the less control over our lives, the more insecurity, the more terribly we treated each other and the earth. The less nourishment for man and for his ego, the more he set individually upon his rivals, and en masse upon them; the more he aspired to brutality.

This was the age of insecurity more than of anxiety, the precarious age which could go up in smoke at a nuclear weapon, at world pollution (and now as I

revise this decades after the 1990s, climate crises) at world war at world tyranny at the loss of livelihood. Our whimpers would not be heard in the noise of the bang.

Global Again

The global economy is an oxymoron. Having an ecology in a global economy is an impossibility. You cannot convert every last piece of grass on earth into commodity and expect to save the flowers. You cannot use up the globe with vast, economically insatiable hordes and expect to have a politically correct "econology." The last scraps of a vast and beautiful world will be warred for in a cold end of dedicated asps, even as we teach our children how to survive in space colonies.

We can recycle what is left in a sterile outer space colony. Dead of sound will be the woods. The seas will rise no more. However, everyone will have become comfortably middle class for a day.

See what our work yields us.

The information age promises another out. Toffler predicted it; others have spoken of it: we can borrow of the tribes and place the borrowings with the selection of artifacts from technology. We can minimize the bad effects of, and the steps of, production, decentralize, reorganize around the heart's fulfillment. I saw it on the isle.

If envy had catalyzed civilization, throughout its stages, certain ones had stayed impervious to envy, keeping their tolerance. It was these who might infuse a return to Eden with a balance. But then, there would have to be a way to limit the compulsions of those whose envy would consciously choose for complexity, and who would once again, create the hierarchical artifacts of societies, pointing them towards earth and other human beings in destructiveness.

A New World

A world centered on providing comfort, ease and power, if those were its more beneficent motivations, a world fragmented into more and more specialisms, inevitably would commit itself to technological, mechanical solutions. And that technology would destroy what it had set about to liberate. And that technology, in the service of greed, rather than of human pleasure, would destroy what it had set about to liberate.

If we had gained every ease we needed by our exploitations, we lost our sense of gentle cooperation by the competitiveness which diminishing resources and dwindling real control over our lives engendered. As we gave up our motile spirit to the demands of economies based on earth materially diminished, technology had not liberated us, but enhanced our capacity for cruelty, and

exploitation. (While some learn cooperation and self-sufficiency again, they are considered strangely heretic.)

It is not that materialism itself is bad, or that all natural self-sufficiency is good; each kind of living, each time stage of history has within its context, goodness; it is that as we have gone, each piece of the process, the trajectory of our history (all over the world) has displaced goodness; leaving it in search not only of redefinition, but of a context – a context in which it may function to fulfill its dramas and needs, healthily, joyfully.

Hierarchy for the Weak: Dominion to Exclude

So, it was not just technology, but an attitude distanced from the relaxed spirit of cooperation within nature, wed to an exclusionary stance, which would plague us. Hierarchical societies seeking dominance and expansion rather than stasis had produced technology.

An exclusionary ethos, imported from the Old World, well before the Industrial Revolution, had been destructive since the beginning. Parochial power cells simply increased their competitiveness as avenues to survival and the fulfillment of human ego became scarce, using the tools at hand.

It was not invention alone which was the villain; it, in the service of a natural and cooperative society, a pleasurable culture, a society in balance would not be the self-propelling, destructive engine it had been.

Technology was not the villain per se. It was point of view. Laid back people, interested in cooperating with each other, could use technology to create a pleasurable existence. But when it cut us off from the sensuality of the earth, we were doomed. Those who still were ignited by the wishes in the woods, the mystery of the hunt, the dew laden paths of deer; those to whom the prairies still schooled with the light of hundreds of expanding halos of rainbows, there perhaps were those in whom a real soul existed. Competent people, competent to provide within the skills of seasons and earth, these could cooperate, did not need always to destroy. The competences we had developed in civilization, as pleasurable, as fulfilling as they were, were often what destroyed us. There was no resolving the frustration of this paradox: the presentation of talents with the plethora of destructions.

But though it was liberty, it was not release in exaltation, (nor freedom). The ones who felt the open spaces brush against their hearts, incite the open senses even beyond the five we own; these knew a different reality. The ones with souls knew the interlinked mystery. My friend Megan hunting in the hearts of the mountains, she knew... One or two others chasing the shadowy deer to the dun dunes, they knew; he knew. A few others. Archetypes who held the ancient skills, they knew…before we threw the woods, the prairies, the colors of strange dawns, the stillness, the hands and the hunt, manhood and femaleness away for

the exchange of arts, knowledge; the loss of dream, replaced by "entertainment."

Perhaps it was Specialism that was the villain because in it we lost the ability to adapt as generalists. Specialism: the translation of the ability of the body or brain (cast apart from each other now in a terrible loss of innocence as a kind of chaff and wheat, dross and gold) to exploit time and resources with particular expertise (to play power games which would let you do so), turn it into currency with which to buy the needs (you once could provide for free, without that monetary third intermediary between "work" and "the need") from men who owned them – compelled yet more mercantilism, specialism, and resulting technology.

Whatever the benefits of specialism for fulfillment, for providing necessities for oneself and family – it seemed that as many who enjoyed their professions, their work, as many hated what they did, resented the monotony of doing it all the time, and were dominated by economic necessity as "wage-slaves." (What they enjoyed was the end result of what they worked at: the free time, the toys.) What had we really gained by attenuating ourselves from primary sufficiency to a secondary and even tertiary sufficiency (of currency and now of virtual, read – artificial – realities); by forfeiting our past as competent generalists within a more earthen context? Which existence was in fact, simply more fun?

What combinations were possible? What is the synthesis of old ways and new?

Parochial Power Cells

Parochial power cells are created out of the tools at hand: island strongholds rising up covertly out of the same history, locally, are found upon other isles. (Their patterns repeat in places where plots to defend or to destroy worlds may be secretly entertained, resulting in overt war, or in secret wars.) What I had learned was that there were humans who were always "islanders" as it meant insular, and those, as myself, who preferred to be islanders as it meant responsible to a whole; the old adage "No man is an..."

Here in the twentieth century, insularity had risen from the scraps left to us; the lust for the creation of more private and dominated islets had intensified, creating its own heavy centrifuge.

I sit inside the lighthouse seemingly safe for a moment from the lightless storms. The yellow glow casts a penumbra out upon the locked-in-grey dunes. The sense of being a mote in a vast distance of space of sea and sky somehow makes it cozier, more intimate. The rains now coming down could ruin, as well as lay down gentle seed. The white rooms look out to the amphitheater of high dunes, barely parting me from the sea, in an illusionary distance and safety. What the place took – the rains and sea from sands – it would replace. That

was its message, what was taken would be given back. But would it? In the war between cycles, between those who took and those who gave back, what was taken would be replaced by Nature, but seldom, now, by man.

What about the millions of humans whose souls had been cast up and down on the rain, destroyed for the sake of so-called right-by-superiority, the same kind of superiority we had demonstrated in out contempt towards the earth. Any act of nature was, if not better than, more comprehensible than the terrible rationale of man.

Imagery is a rune; it delivers messages beyond the intellect, beyond inductive reason. Compellingly, two images kept recurring, that of the tribes (east and west of this continent) and now that of the serfs at the dune castles of gold.

The Castle has tidal flats, moats of molten gold. He is tall, blonde, strong; the warden of the place; around him the wind settles like tatters and scarfs, birds at his shoulders; he is a poacher here in the king's domain, scavenging for what he can get of birds to eat, venison. I no longer see primal men in buckskins out over these plains, but serfs in their jerkins and bells. He would aspire to what the king has, perhaps his women or horses; but keep too, something of his own rebellious affiliations with his own, the deprived. Somehow the very hierarchy from which migrant colonizers sought escape becomes dominant: hierarchies released from constraints release ambition for material equality. The concept of freedom from oppression by tyrants becomes mixed with the concept of freedom to exploit.

People become what has oppressed them. Hierarchies exclude; men become in turn exclusionary, seeking the equal opportunity not just to live gracefully but to dominate others. An exclusionary way had accompanied the Puritans and other cohesive groups here. A turf-defending frenzy had in a way defined the essence of the Puritans' arrival. Unlike the tribally corporate, relatively egalitarian Separatists of Plymouth and the Cape, the ones who came to Boston came with that penchant of the petty bourgeois to prove themselves aristocrats. The arrivals who kept in touch with their yeoman roots held onto a kind of egalitarianism, while those who pretended to aristocracy, who aspired to it, or who thought that by their "work" they achieved it, felt due to become the grey masters of the land. (The corporate formations of early colonizers would eventually evolve into the profit-making malignancy of certain carnivorous corporations, with lean grey master and fat grey slaves.) They formed cohesive, exclusionary groups who locked up the land by laws, who took it by words, who stole in the name of their god given right to do so. It was a long tradition in Europe, if not a universal meme of humanness. (Yet the natives here in this first piece of north America, to their downfall, had been inclusionary, hospitable, at least at first.) These unions of pinched and stingy hearted made hay in the

sun, while building moats against all comers. These same had, in common with Nazis and other rampant dominators, the ability to make some other humans feel lesser. In America sheer force of puritanical and godly arrogance had made everyone different – from Indian, to Quaker to newly arriving ethnics – feel somehow inferior. (Not to mention prosecuting that "superior" dominance in genocides.)

Parochial cells of cohesively destructive people are inevitable when the capture of power is motivation. These are islanders, as limited in their hearts as species on islands. These were the poisoners; poisoning relationships, poisoning love itself, poisoning the waters under the receiving (and giving) and gorgeous earth, poisoning political processes; yet possessed of a superb packaging. An unholy alliance of the crude with the effete. Like all Iagos and King Richards, in the cause of envy and eternity, they would pleasantly poison the good of the world and preserve what was left in print and in museums. (The generous, inclusive and unenvious waited, like liberation itself, self-contained in their warmth; some enjoyed things as they were, making the best of it; some waited for a non-hierarchical lifeway which would complement them, do them justice, give them more than the current one did.)

The exclusionary mentality may have had a root before "civilization;" may have been a cause of it. Groups exclude groups for the safety of their own. It is easy to perceive how it grows fierce with the feudal devolution of cultures. The parochial who proclaimed that everything was fair for their own turf, their group or unit of self, these lock up life into the same discrete compartments it has known since he or she was a serf or an aristocrat or a gildsman serving a singular purpose in an ordered ranked medieval universe. The same gridwork which sets up its own mentality as righteous dogma sets up the land into pockets. Loving crows, it can hate humans; loving itself it can hate all else. Loving God it can hate all heathens.

The exclusionary mentality, the parochial who proclaimed that everything was fair by god or nature, would always exploit the earth they purported to save, tyrannize and enslave the people they claimed to free. (Severe compartmentalizing created courtesy of a monotheistic epoch.)

Yet before complex societies, tribal groups set upon each other as well, proclaiming "others" of enemies.

Within every human culture and society lay the good and the ill, the desiccated of heart and the full. Which mentality which had allowed the decimation of original Americans, which motivated the extermination of millions in Europe, which plundered the land?

How then did men and women murder and destroy so easily? Larceny and murder. It is easy to steal from those who were not of worth. The worth which your peer group defined. It did not need sociobiology or the selfish gene to justify the practice. It was simply easy to do damage when you were assured of

your goodness, your place in the community as good. It was easy to steal when desperation made you face a place empty of success or food or shelter should you lose what you had achieved. Precariousness meets Goodness.

We have lost the concordance with "reality" which animals and ancestors had, and unless we perceive the planet through the eyes of the living tribes and of the animals left, we will never understand how to seek a balance between the cultivated apple of the modern world and the wild fruits of the past.

In the orchard where the apples were eaten, the simple change of attitude which viewed the world as something to be converted to useable goods changed the basic interaction of man and the "wild" earth, predestined every step after the change. E.B. White in a positive mood observed that wondrously, while we had ruined a good deal of our nest, we had all these people trying to repair the damage. To me, it appears that our culture predetermines us to disease the body, if not precisely to play doctor, then to, as a result of our good acts, feel heroic mending it.

Supermarket environmentalism, available to the upper middle class.
And where are the souls of the dead whales now?

All nations are doing it, using Forest converting to it to Farm, using the seas for fishes for trade, running out of space for growing, being blown apart by wars, expanding, changing stopping, using; converting the inward earth to goods/services factories machines, to death in the name of pleasure for some.

In the next round of expansion, we would explode the thin skin of the earth. The very light would fall down around us, like Chicken Little. We would say – the sky is falling – unless we sought a renewable stasis, a balance.

If ants live on a balloon and continue to breed, they will have less space. If at the same time they create machines which chew up the balloon in order to provide toxic food, expendable goods, JOBZ, how much of the balloon is going to be left in x number of years?

This Broken Archipelago makes mention of the mathematical laws of species' abundance on islands (as did EO Wilson famously); they are invariably limited, less complex, less adaptive. Over the world, the world is becoming a national park, an island. All over the world starving humans will do what they can (as Lazell mentions) to survive – vis a vis the harvest of sea turtles for food. They will eat terns in Giana for food; they will cut and use fuel for firewood as every study from Food First to the Global 2000 Report, so long back has prophesied. Where men are not provided with alternates to "job loss" they will fight against habitat preservation. Unless we reduce our appetites for consumption as well as for human pupation, we will exceed our limits.

Many, including Barry Commoner, Paul Ehrlich, the Club of Rome have warned us.

We will become like the very feral animals we have domesticated, and which helped us to expand rampant upon the isle. Areas we have protected will be opened, used, polluted, destroyed.

My generation, many of us, have had a love affair with nature. We have rejected the world, many of us, which commercializes everything including the human soul. We know that with the Order which earth reasserts in every rebirth there is a kind of spiritual force. This godhead is at war with the irrational attenuated ones which proclaim a certain group's dominance over another, to hoard, to lock up, rather than to celebrate and to share. But not only nature has an order supreme, so does history. It is irresponsible to deny the interconnection of the whole. It is irresponsible to fete the wonders of the glorious earth and sea when you can go home to eat, to a home, and others cannot; when you go home to a place which by its very devices threatens the wellbeing of the earth and deprives men and creatures in other parts of the planet of their chance for a life of joy. Until the conscious activators on this our one planet put the pieces of its new perceptions together to heal the thousands of wounds in its body we have not done enough – every island is at risk.

What was the stench like? Of the barrios in Mexico? What was it like to have worms? What was it like to be hungry, not just once in a while, but often; to face a terror I had faced briefly, and might again – all the time – that of having no home to come to? What was it like to starve in the Sahel because of what we have done to the weather of earth, to watch your children die? Your first born, your last born? What was it like to be an oiled bird, to sink, cold, without a last flight? What was it like to be a Douglas fir which had lived beyond the generations of a nation, to feel the axe against the flesh of your anciency? What was it like to see the land you loved, taken and chained up to a drill, a bulldozer? Or never to be able to come home to a place poisoned by anything from pesticide to arsenic to radioactivity?

We abdicate universal concerns in favor of our own piece of mortality well spent.

Perception New

We had come far, turning against the consumptive illness withering us. It was not enough to pioneer, to captain people out of the shoals of self-absorption into an old respect for nature; we needed to perceive that the loss of the hands and the body in the seasons lead us into susceptible situations under other's control; that technology and population had to come to some limits, that technology's very use and manufacture needed to change to something "softer," that nature meant participation – not just a viewing of a life – that our

perception of our own goodness had to change. We needed to redefine terms of freedom away from freedom to exploit. We needed to create an inclusive ethic/action for our fellow beings, not an exclusionary one. The motivation to "best" all the time was an aggressive, hostile, ultimately perhaps, a pervasively sexist one, as author Vandana Shiva and others suggest. It was an ethic, nonetheless, in either sex, which was outmoded.

We needed in the middle age of our current process to be critical of ourselves; to rip apart our preconceptions, to reassess, put back together not merely to – as invasive precariousness always dictates – reassert old faithful dogmas in a lather of reassuring delusion.

The issue was not political. It was pro-planet or anti-planet.

We needed to enlarge our perceptions to practice other sight.

Darwin

It was said that the exclusionary group ethos was selected for at the gene level. That inclusive fitness was enhanced by a viciously expellant group. It was said that the individual within this group, too, should seek to dominate because his biology would be better passed on. So, the "selfish gene" and the determinations of E.O. Wilson were misused (as Darwin's too had been) for the readings of "reality." A callous heart which let organisms struggle individually alone in a Darwinian nightmare, had misread evolution. Organisms evolved cooperatively, in communities, for the benefit of the whole menu. As some biologists such as Frans Van der Waal and David Suzuki proposed.) If each group in its collective arrogance and each single organism divided itself by its ego into you and me, struggling only for its own and immediate family's survival, disregarding all others, that selfishness would eventually destroy the community within which it dwelled. It would be suicide. (Group against group; person against person.) Maladaptive.

As the world became more competitive, less cooperative, less gentle, we faced danger. The fact was that the over-speculative, specialized, and consumptively, uncompassionately, competitive, turf-oriented would devour themselves and the earth. The gentle may be temporarily cast aside, but they would inherit (as a John Mellencamp song reminds us), or else the destructive humans would end up in a face off to the last solitary self.

Eventually this kind of fitness, this strong rivalry, opportunism, would turn on itself, when a world void of selflessness made everybody else's enemy.

Who?

My heart is a harrier. I am upwind of all enemies.

My soul is an owl.

Archetypes reappear. My modern friend still hunts and fishes for food occasionally; capable, able, a man. Another friend, a descendant of the English settlers, fished once for profit, owns the boats now. They both might see themselves

passing through the small stage of history here on the flat and wavy land.

How might they combine, one envying the other perhaps the abilities of the first, the goods of the second? What technical aspects of a pleasurable life, what, gifts of the heart, how much of nature, how little, could limit them; both selecting from sail or motor the simplest, least harmful material manifestation of a spiritual way of being a protective defender, a capable provider, a warrior, in short using maleness honestly and not destructively in the world?

Would there be a synthesis: some technology, some participation in the process and processional of the real (star and skywind, sunsnow-earthseason) world? Some small-scale self-production of that addictive technology – or none of it; just a being of spirit, of heart, friendship, strength, understanding, generosity, courage.

If the weir and sail and motor fishermen had stripped the sea of fish from this very place, how could we "repay the sea?" If the modern age had stripped the world, how could we ever give back what had been taken? What aspects of generosity have we forgotten? What reality of being? What exquisite empathies?

From the destructive components of slander, jealousy and misunderstanding, which may have created our artifacts and some of our societal constructs, (paradoxically, even some of the beneficial ones in reaction – seeking fairness, tolerance) – and which had set us upon each other like the worst of zealots, could something emerge that was salvageable?

(Ego in part had produced technology; ego could be a terrible burden carried back into a new paradise, even without technology, even with the paint and pigment adorning our flesh with the spirit of the seasons. Synthesis would never work unless the heart knew how giving the seasonal storms and tides could be.)

Every time I came here, I fantasized about living with less, living within the bounds of a place, about a smaller, simpler more pleasurable life, a life without enemies, filled with moons and warmth. Every time I came here life seemed skimmed and shorn of accoutrements, I could live within nature's terms, with my hands, live essentially, breathe with the breath of winds. Stripped down, like the place itself, huge with sky - cleansed like the place itself in its dome of vapor, I could be comfortable, safe, with the intimacy of everyday imagery. Energized.

If you laugh at my wish to live here in the exposure with the rains, winds, and with less, try it – camp for a month, and see the resulting vision: Concordance with an interior self with an exterior reality of earth brings man back to a balance devoutly to be wished, another concept of Eden combining the past, the present, the future.

On Monomoy, who could live as they had, in the exposure of winds? Amongst the birds. Fishing, gardening in the sands. Content without TVs, radios, cell phones, computers, cars. Inward. Who could sustain it now, here, where the

winds blew? On little, who could live, now that our lives were made soft by convenience. Who would want to cast off the accoutrements we had gained?

And yet, can a holistic culture live with one which isolates and fragments, without coming to be fragmented itself? Could you balance what might be inherently destructive with what was not? My own laws were more or less, give back more than what is given to you, take from them what is taken from you. Love where you may and can. Fight injustice. Tolerate where you cannot like.

We had become orphans because those suffering from lapsed abilities as generalists, men less capable of hunting, fishing, planting, creating (in community), had made us orphans. Archetypal men in each culture and race perhaps those suffering from sensory deprivation, from skill deprivation, from religious contempt for sexuality, religious denial of the living worlds beyond man, had only been able to find fulfillment in materialism, not solely the materialism of riches, but that of manifesting their beings in terms of the material, of materiel, an immortality in stone and gold for an after-life and death. (The engines they made of their discoveries caused only damage. Perhaps there could be no synthesis.)

There could be no synthesis without gentleness. There could be no gentleness without nature. Thus, perhaps there could be no synthesis of hands which built and painted their own arts and shelters, of seasons which man harvested, fished, desired in, if synthesis still made us victims of those machines and humans which held our needs. Maybe it was all attitude, point of view.

(From the island's perspective I can seek to change ways of seeing and doing. I can perceive it from above. I can dream myself backwards.)

The land had let me see from its perspective. If I had no history of my own (my own people's having been, to a large degree, lost), I could adopt one. I could try to perceive each era of the past four hundred years as if it were a decade in my own life. I could be loaned the heart of the land and its original people and its animals with which to see. It was an old friend of mine, long since turned priest, who had taught me that point of view is crucial to how one reacts to and sees the world. I was become both Monomoy and a Monamoyick. I was the once richly cedared edge land, more fixed with bears and with wolves and with passenger pigeons in mourning for their own passing.

Cold Night /Dreaming History
Mixed Metaphor

Suddenly the chill. The hurt sound of a calling bird. The unrequited moaning of an ocean constant in its heart. The calls of a few last shorebirds. A shriveled piece of moon hangs about after sunrise. The spirit of the place is left alone (perhaps) with its (own) reflections on historical inevitability.

It is not enough to write a history (nor even to naturalize and philosophize

about a place); one must try to understand how that history evolved out of human and earthen nature and more – how that history affects the spirit of everything living, in each of its permutations. One wants to be able to understand not only how we change history, but how, once changed, it affects our heart, our behavior to each other, and the land in which it is enacted.

What are the inevitabilities writ by us into this land?

History too, is the obsession with what should not be lost. Because a giant forest, a brave people, senses which understood animal speech have been exterminated, should they be forgotten, as if they had never lived? Because a time has been, in its events and aesthetics, rolled over by another time, should it be forgotten? It is not so much even that "we are doomed to repeat the history we forget" but that we are diminished in the present by forgetting the past.

So many images flood me, as if the ghosts of the past with their worlds in time insist on being heard and seen and seen again. As I walk through the blowout cleft between the dunes back to this place, the past comes up at me like a play staged on pieces of storm. I am the History Woman; I seek in the peaked light of twilight, something to make time heal.

History was a matrix into which our lives were embedded. Its dynamics plane out the facets of what happened to us. History needs to be compressed into a lens, so that we could see the past as clearly as our own lives; made to a rite as intense as one made by myth and religion, to understand ourselves. This prism place refracted the light of time for me.

History has themes even as personal lives do which some historians have chosen; those themes are the conflicts of races, species, nations within the ecological context. How are patterns of cultural process entwined with and limited by nature as well as the human disposition? And how do those forces in turn affect the intimate personal "reality?" History and nature have their objective standing and verity, but the subjective view is of interest too, how those "realities" filter through the heart and soul of an individual or a society. Even as the smallest mote of history made its whirlpools out to the largest, from the local to the national web, I could see that there was a place in the whirlpools and webs where personal history intersected with local, national, global history, even as history intersected with the biomes of earth. From here, I could try to understand the pattern to which I, like the tiniest Monomoy in the larger scheme of things, belonged.

Hot Day – "This Island Earth:"
Nature Creates History and Civilizations, Cause and Effect

History, it has been written, happens not where there is peace. History is the reaction of aggression to nature and other men. (That women drive social

change through cultural evolution is a given, but that males have had the dominant roles in many complex ranked societies is also true. I have used "man" generically for humans. I "see" as a female.)

What makes greed? Prosperity itself; a release from adversity and the wish for a kind of material revenge? Adversity itself? Ugliness of place, a reaction to it which materializes itself in "art?"

I could pretend the island was the earth. Here it might have happened. The stages of man loom out upon the scrims set by mists over the daylight marsh and dunes:

Settlement for Abundance; Settlement out of Exile

There was the desert, the marshlands, the sea with its swimming beings. There were the creeks and rivers which could carry men on reed barges. There was the lake of ducks and reeds, where animals came to drink. There forest.

The wetlands provide edible, plantable grasses, tubers and roots; the ponds provide fish and fowl, the sea edges, fish. Forest and grasslands provide game. Men use these in their time. Men agglomerate in more abundant areas, in their seasons. Men begin to settle in these, using more of the resources on her because they are so abundant year-round, and because the weather is warm enough. Men compete.

Perhaps:

Men who competed too hard, or not well enough, who killed or who grew envious – less competent or overly aggressive men – move on or are pushed out to less desirable areas. (Perhaps constricted geology, bottlenecks of resources and populations, contribute to this moving on.)

Those exiled to the exposure of marsh and sands had not only learned to settle of necessity; of necessity they learned trade; to exchange food and needs, needed goods, for survival.

Perhaps by the sea even in the less desirable marsh, fish and shellfish allow him permanence; he and his families settle into houses, exchanging dried fish for the hunter's meat from beyond. He trades upriver; his settled populations grow. He expands his settlements.

Integrated Niches

United by need, the mountain country is integrated with the bounteous sea edge by the actions of middlemen who organized the centralized trading at a place of power. The river is the road for trade.

The area of sea and mountain is now integrated with the space across which some large animals still run, are hunted, and then are tamed; that is, the plains. Those niches, scarce or flush with food are integrated to the center.

Having been pushed to lesser land – a marsh or swamp – out to the edge waters where mammals drank and fowl were abundant but where it was

uncomfortable to live all the time because of flies and heat, it turned out now there was plenty, ironically, in the settled place; where there had been harshness, now there was plenty. The area of the riverbanks and the marsh and of the estuary, of its emptying, once for outcasts is found to be fertile, so not only are there shellfish and fish to eat, reeds for homes – but the seeds of cut cereal grains sprout up and begin to be planted.

Animals which come from the cold down to the warmer place, from southern grasses to the north in odd times of cold, are caught and fenced in, domesticated. Grain is grown for them. Here there would be planting by the marsh, of medicines, of fiber for cloth, of drugs which grogged the fish swimmers to make them surface. As the men settle, they grow defensive of their areas.

Waves of gentler men of great strength, who liked decidedly to roam, did so perhaps deliberately.

As lands are settled men who are less aggressive, less lazily in need of sedentism, more adept at motion and hunting, move on, willingly towards the new world, the land of snakes, as it will be called by certain legends. They crossed the seas but boats or walked on tenuously to a new land mass.

All over the world the isles of pockets of pushed out men in hard places conflicted with those in abundance in the lush places. Hierarchy was born of crisis. Moving about like a bacterium it colonized and changed the world, bringing its gifts of grain and gold and war. Walls of ziggurats or temples or castles were built as men formed in factions, aggressing against each other.

The original ejection and exile caused a loss of face. Losing fluidity to confinement there was even more a loss of face, of male potency, of the power of the spirit, loss of face, space and grace. The harsh land of the marshes and desert turned men against nature, to compete with her – as well as to compete with men and animals. Loss of face they sought to ameliorate by the power of war or of goods, of gods, or even of sex. If there were objects which contained power, like mica or jade or carved gold, the trader could use these to regain a sense of dominance. And so trade in objects created from nature intensified.

The occasional horticulturalist of the first settlements would by new need now grow still more food to support the traders with surpluses: They now planted more and protected agriculture with weapons. Domesticates of animals, once semi-domesticated, are now herded up and down valleys. They replace the wild animals whose food sources are depleted, who are hunted by settled men. Farmers become full time farmers. Specialism began to be created.

Agriculture would further divide natural man into economic man by setting man against the wildness to kill the wolves, to fear and hate the beasts and weathers which destroyed his crops, to want labor saving devices or slaves.

Yet Agriculture is not the culprit per se which releases man to specialism, materialism, war, overpopulation, rather the enabler of the seed in the ego/consciousness of man, brought to light by the environmental pressures of his geography and the internal deciding codes of his genes.

Centralized Walls

A palace is built of sunbaked mud, and men come to it voluntarily for the new life. At the center place of exchange was now built a temple of stone to the gods which protected the carriers of the goods, the makers of the sacred objects, the objects of clan power, national or even personal power.

The nomad would raid, walls would be built.

The invaders could come from the edges to raid. Warriors would become full time soldiers. Thus, come more intense wars and the new religions against nature. The pressure of faceless war - not the valor of tribal skirmish or joust-makes emergency accommodations. You could war, you could lead. Afterwards the soul has changed.

The new intensification of the creation of goods of varied kinds, intensifies the use of resources, organizes the tasks of man differently: builds a temple here of imported stone brought upriver on a reed boat; brings wood from the forests, makes a center for protection from raids, for the excursion for goods; for an exchange area of goods, foods. The ethic of redistribution is given away in tribute to a leader able to organize in crisis or for profit. Status is born, becomes hereditary. Craftsmen and priest are not kin any longer, but strangers.

Then was a further loss of face, of spaciousness; the change of a redistributive society, egalitarian, into a linear one where rank was inherited, down the mortal line.

So "civilization," whether it was caused by patchiness, a desert next to an abundant marsh which created a contrast in the situations of men squeezed in by mountains or increasing population, created not only an internal envy, but an external interchange, a settlement, a centralization to a temple, a place of walled protection and spiritual power where leaders lived.

War created crisis reaction, stratifying tasks, storage of food increasing. They became, as more men came to the center to settle, to trade for the enticing goods, as their populations grew, more constricted, squeezed, more competitive, turning against the exposed places; finally making conquest, moving on, using up. (Overenergized, the mythic Twin who pulled up everything.) Despising, hating, conquering, dominating, distressing the earth and other men.

War, trade, integration, all continued the diversification of tasks which in turn lead to a giving up of autonomy to a center: here is the walled city, urbanization, civilization, and more diversification. Into the heaven of earth competition had come. It was not merely the need to solve material problems

but the need to regain a lost potency which may have motivated change to an externalization of power through objects, objects carved, and made, and traded. Economic man is created, even in anciency, in the realms of kings, in river valleys where coppers and mica become prerequisites for spiritual power. In old World and New, the Hopewell, the Sumerians had objects others came to want. Greed forgets mystery and the redistribution of power and goods. Man reorganizes for trade, war, and religion, by rank.

(As egalitarian societies yield to hierarchical, centralized ones, some men constantly have to dominate their reality and their women or be dominated by an authority of another's reality, having none of their own.)

As the sun sweeps down over the feminine scent of the private sands, over the open flats, men no longer sweep their arms open to skies outside, nor stoop to the ground in humility, instead they take the sky power for their own in arts and religion manifested within the world. Whilst men move to temples and to fortified palaces only to find themselves bounden.

Perhaps: Pressure created a rage of ego in man. (Or, did the terrible rage, a wish to show a self superior to other men, lions, death, create the pressure?) There were three pressures: those of not having, not being able to do, not being able to have internal vision. Loss of place, of face, of soul. The loss of freedom created by the pressures of scarcity, war, materialism, becoming bounden to the land or to a singular task, the links forge to the new material needs, did that create in man an anger which further intensified his need for power? His very vitality was drained off by the new fragmentation; even his sexuality changed.

The more he coveted power, the more was he fragmented by himself into specialism to attain those needs (which women now coveted as well) for wealth, for power, for ease. He no longer had himself to present to a mate as whole and capable; he had the gifts he could garner by his arts, craft, brain, or brawn, singularly. The singularity he knew created his status.

Thus, the first civilizations gave up their generalism to centralized power, god, king, something deified, something which owned the wealth or knowledge or stored the cereal grains. As that power compressed itself over the many, revolt or removal to other places occurred. When the ranked societies destroyed the ground under foot, when need could not be satisfied, the constructs of the societies collapsed. Colonizers seeking to escape oppression moved on, taking their economic ways with them, finding economic freedom but not natural freedom, a temporary draining of resources in new lands by conquest.

But some chose, they CHOSE differently.

The originals of the new world moved on, carrying gentle concern with them; enjoying nomadism; they were not the weak incompetents pushed out to overenergized manifestations of self in the old world; they had chosen

motion; they were the Twin with less ferocity. Even pushed by failure into hard mountains, constricted into staying settled, they were somehow less fierce, even as warriors, seeking an inward beauty. North American originals from east to west almost universally fought the changes which would drag them out of the whole world into specialism, fragmentation, and material fulfillment as a ne plus ultra. At first those changes towards complexity which were brought from within by their own cultures of the hot lower legs of the land masses were contained by those cultures in gentler contexts, and often, after hundreds if not thousands of years, overthrown as the ancient Pubeloan cultures had done. The gentle here had often opted deliberately against complex and cruel cultures, casting the core of power out rather than embracing its proselytization.

In the forests, all over the world as folklorist Joseph Campbell showed, even in the forests of Europe, people refused the arts of civilization at first, preferring the woodland way to the stiff containers of "civilization." Old World men in the forests, such as the Britons with the Romans, had at first done the same, but finally embraced the new artifacts of "civilizations" with much more of a permanent conversion. This seemed to be more of a psychological imperative than an ecological one.

In the Old World boats which carried traders to collect goods for artifacts, for needs essential and symbolic, would flourish on the rivers, carry the things made, occupy the seas. And the sea would by her starred navigation, her need for durable vessels, create a pragmatism which might paradoxically turn humans against the very skies and weathers, while expanding the worlds of man. The vessels would make man-in-place yet more dependent on the goods he brought, more vulnerable.

They travelled out of the end of the Forest Age far north of Mesopotamia, in the feudal age, to a forest here (in the new world) to cut it with tools. To dominate the earth, to war with the motherland, to find enough and then to use it up.

The limits of the isles were burst, and complex culture which arguably could be demonstrated to have evolved out of cruelty of dissatisfied, less able humans, descended on new worlds.

(A good case could be made in the footsteps of Toynbee, Schmookler, De Vore and others that the weak and self-compensatingly incompetent had created civilization as a tool for their ineptitude. Good arguments could be made that natural man lives his whole life as art, and is, was because of his attachment to the spirit and flesh of life, kinder, by necessity, not by some attenuated code learned in a wooden box.)

To be responsible then to his family he needed to respond to his times, whatever they were. Yet, each distillation lost something, perhaps reduced and

weakened a satisfying totality of skills and strengths even as it expanded the specific jobs and work available to humans.

Who had the wisdom to select a synthesis of the old with the new, rather than letting the circumstances of the culture push him, select him?

North American indigenous humans, as others for a while across the earth, responded to place by never being trapped by it. Change can create a change of disposition. Though certain forces such as storm and snow may be inescapable, one can move from the exposure of open lands to the shelter of inner ones. No one area can dominate a man, thus.

Refrain: History As Place

How do places shape us? What does a forest make us? Does it make us mysterious, shy, protected, tranquil and sweet? What does a hot, sandy place make us; does it make us shrewd as its creatures, longing for permanent shelter, for pits in the ground to cool off in? What does a grassland make us? Do we become like its herds, mystics, fleet-footed, hardened to exposure of wind and heat and cold? What does a sea make us? Do its waters and abundance release us from the laws of the land, change us to make us fly above certain traditions, anarchic?

Do we become like the desert, dreaming her winds, yet harsh as rock and sand? Do we become like fertile wet places, lush and tempting? Do we become canny and wily like the open saltmarsh creatures; fluffy and content like the freshwater marsh's creatures, created clever to keep dry, to avoid being saturated? Or do we live against the areas; prospering by them, turning against them to use them? For eras man used the land as a friend, coaxing her. Then he no longer befriended. A sea-change came. Man used the lands abusively. Not flowing with the tempers and modes of earth, he, frustrated, turned against her; becoming like parts of her to use her tricks against herself. Instead of living like a duck on the reeds, he drained the desert marshes, built ziggurats upon it.

Instead of enjoying the fear which the mist-filled high darkness of woods can create, he turned against the fear, cutting into the darkness and letting in a false light which perhaps should not have been there. Instead of enjoying the sea, he plundered them. Instead of living like the spider in the sands to burrow there, or to visit them, like the voles and the birds, he sought to live on them in ways unmeant for the edge of the world. Instead of being vast and winged as the geese and ducks on sullen flat marshes, moving on, moving into shelter in valleys, he sought to stay fixed in one place and turn that place to his configuration, his preconception.

Scarcity makes some magnanimous, some hard and small. Bounty makes some possessive, others generous. Or was it that some were simply generous

or scanty regardless of resource-reactiveness; as a cultural or personal Choice?

Place a self-assured organism locked into solely a coastal region, a desert, exposed and hot, green forests, or seductively fogged marshes, or in riverine areas between mountains in a valley, and the aggression which allows a male to prepare his survival, may change subtly where singularity of habitat limits him.

How does the narrowing of singular places into singular activities affect our psyches? What happens to a man's character as he gives up the seed and the land for crafts and villages? If agriculture makes us possessive of the land, it can compel us to greed or away from it. Farmers may become Oedipal in their inward nuclear families. The mindset of the farmer may be grounded within an ambivalence towards nature. Farmers in green vales, without population pressures, whose flocks do not overgraze their earth, who are not forced to hard, waterless labor in the sun, might love the natural world and never turn against her to seek material ease. The mindset of the fisher, sea-trader may find an airy, manic release from earthbound laws or responsibilities, create tyrannical ranked groups out of range of land. Singular habituations may create familial results: families made unnatural by external pressure may become obsessively oriented on mother or father, inverted. Seamen may return to shore with a romantic illusion of family, a distended sense of courage akin to some professional soldiers. Urban economies and complexities may fracture nuclear families into individual humans, struggling to find community.

The Twins

Many indigenous American myth groups have a set of stories about Twins. It is in the dual nature of man, passive and active, weak/strong, internalizer/externalizer that balanced socialization is found. The Twins are metaphors for the over energized or the balanced reaction to elementals in the creation of culture. They are similes of action for the Choice in ethos, behavior, environment.

If persona has within its predisposed biology limited responses to nature which in turn determine its psyche, then within the limitation of each type of biome, man may perhaps select two responses to stress - one which is weak: angry, practical, externalized by handedness; one which is stronger: fluid, internal, visionary, essential. Given man's handedness and intellect as it has evolved, adapted to circumstance, inevitable responses to resources, to situations may be predictable. There may be simply two kinds of humans: those who have an abundance within of the capacity for vitality, pleasure; and those who do not and who begrudge the others, theirs. Culture may eject the latter and nature may release, by injecting him to harsher and harsher areas, a more and more unfeeling organism, whose lack of interior sensory-ness may be compensated for by externals. If biology with environment creates in us

inevitable patterns, once culture catches us it solidifies our spiral and circular route into a linear procession. If biology and nature create in us inevitable patterns, it is up to us finally to perceive those and to make conscious choices, (of culture), (of process.)

The elders knew the secret, looking out from their red rocks - not to be pushed by environmental scarcity or difficulty in the first place; not to be propelled by ambition or loss of face, by pressure manmade or natural, into needing to give up self-supply, freedom, the energy of the total body within the wholeness of the seasons, as they enacted their issuances through the places of earth.

The offerings of places had caused men to compete, had incited their cultures and caused history.

Men reacted to men and to nature/circumstance, environs. Power, ambition propelled change. Other men followed because they wanted to survive, to let their families live and live well. They did not question how they lived if their families were well, though some may have preferred to remain hunters, not to farm, nor to war - to survive by the clam and the feather rather than to sell knowledge for the day's wage. They did what they needed to do, and finally it became what they thought they wanted to do. For many.

People didn't care if they lost their freedom, as long as they had enough – a job, food, entertainment. The gifts we exchanged the earth for: new arts, entertainment, information, motions, science – were they worth the price?

For others, the inevitable corruptions of centralization which specialism brought were obvious.

Civilization after Industrialization gave up the land to machinery which created an easier life; invention was the weapon wielded over the past hierarchies of certain agrarian societies, as a liberating tool. Yet, this exchange/evolution created a possible danger: that corporate structures would centralize to consolidate a control over food-shelter-energy-information. That coalescing thus, they would further make a union with overt rule by covert government, for their own self-aggrandizement.

This unholy union could, in hyperbole, perpetuate itself by means of any means: conspiracy, manipulation. On Atlantis in this fantasy, we give up freedom for a false freedom, a liberty to make wealth and artifacts free us by their expedience. By what is often exploitation. Most will be content with this. And never look back.

If power congeals of its own accord, beyond any laws, according to the ineluctable laws of evil, allowed to expand by the inevitable complexities of civilizations, who would care? Did it matter, compared to the pleasurable days we might have by bank account and boat and beach in the hot dreaming fluidity of the summers?

Against the rock which is motion and stillness, we humans are short in duration. Is what triggers the birth of evil, of untempered ambition and untempered materialism, a misconception of pleasure and goodness?

Consciousness itself is the enemy. Consciousness itself is the cure. Naiveté or a lack of self-knowledge as a species is not desirable, no longer an adaptive quality. Acceptance of what is to take from it what is pleasurable, is not enough, now. We become irresponsible, thus, to our brethren. The examination of experience to create conscious choices for action is desirable: the examination of a whole, not merely of unintegrated, unrevolutionary pieces. Synthesis: Nature/Culture/Survival.

Conscious choice may supersede an ecologically created imperative.

If an econo/moy will free me as before nomadism may have, how will it also enclose me?

How did the place I lived in create me? as a creature, as a human?

We have created ever more destructive structures of our societies in the culturally chauvinistic illusion that they are better and better, while often spiraling away from the best of ourselves, from some harmonious detente with the ground. It is not human nature which is the evil ineluctably, but a certain kind of human nature, brought out by environment, nature/weather/seasons – multiplied by sorry cultures, born out of historic imperatives, to create intensified evils.

On the Island Again

Too exposed, like an x-raying wad, the sun, I could look out here to the bone sands, and with the spume of oceans like a pipe smoke from the Lakota chanupa, see the world. Like an eagle perceive it from above. And here the world was in the smallest place vectored, centered as under a magnifying glass. My world was magnified, expanded, melted down in this heat of energies.

Looking out from a place like Monomoy flatlands, or a place like the petal sheafed shists of the Badlands, here is a world which is all-encompassing. The changes of light, of rock of shape, keep the soul occupied. There is that sense of connection, of stillness in the space or in the seas - a sense of the connections in a place beyond love, hate, indifference, success or failure, beyond birth death passivity rejection, where the mystery connects certain souls in beauty. Contentment. We are so connected to each other through love/desire, through place, by the Alive, by living.

Dunes turn dark, gunmetal with winter, slipping a gold frost over them as the possible gyrfalcon might enter or the snow owl scan for the fleet soft, thick, pewter voles. Curling the land up under its own tail, lacquered, congealed,

shellacked by cold. Then I may sleep in a hole of earth or tree. Then I may burrow. Then I may leave by wings. I may sleep in a hole of earth or tree.

Soundless of the gulls, the black bellies, the querulous yellowlegs, are too mostly soundless now. A distant foghorn carries in on the fog; fog is clustered and shirred like the green algae in the tidal pools of the summer, waiting to be born green once again. Feathery, everything dissolving, what was it like to be a biped then?

Mostly Dusk; Personal History:
"Monomoy, The Novel"

Locally

If the early years had in dwellings and attitudes more in common with coyotes, fiddler crabs, wolf spiders; if the abodes were more like burrows and dens – if some of the early settlers were more like Indians and villeins, more allied with those, who, shrouded in mists, supplied inner spirit with imagery from beauty around themselves – the subsequent prosperity could break away from the drama of the natural world, enforce unpoetic pragmatism.

Now in the second age, after the Revolt, the Federalist revival of prosperity was dedicated to the entrepreneurial spirit. Perhaps the Cape Codders on shore became more allied with the old royals and merchants, with what had formerly oppressed them, and with the niceties of life. Men onshore were one kind of man; farmers longed for adventure. Men offshore were another kind - "pitch polled" by bad bars they stayed ashore afterwards or got back up on the seas. Men who by the seas had been harmed wanted to save others from harm. Men who soldiered and whaled wanted comfort afterwards. Men who had less wanted more. Men who stayed ashore wanted to accumulate something of contribution to the world to let them know they had done good, wanted to accumulate substance to let them know they had lived. Men who were cornered, by other men or by lack, wanted to survive by any means. Within a limitation of circumstances, how many finite responses were available to man, the archetype. (Our arrogance to think we are always unique, perhaps, even if our creations of those such as Hamlet and Oedipus are uniquely expressed.)

On the Moy there was that willingness to participate in the pleasures of life, though those may have been defined in a material way. They seemed to be a fair-minded, saucy group, for whom the prospect of adventure continued to mean as much or more as the pinching of pennies for profit. As historian Freeman said, "a man's brains were not located in his purse."

Character might have changed with the times then: Medieval serfs perhaps were more like the Indians, save in their tolerance of hierarchy and their acceptance of the yoke of farming. Now they looked for an external

manifestation of status, before out of reach, or not desired. Yet on Monomoy men remained cooperative to a degree.

Some of the romantic imagery of the early years then, almost as satisfying in its aesthetics as a tribal life yet leading inevitably towards entrapment would not change until the 20th century when industrialized monotony began to rule. Thoreau even found mackerel fishing dull, repetitive, boring and "ant-like." It was one of the few times he was ever downright nasty about an occupation. In spite of Thoreau, Kittredge reports Cape men enjoyed fishing in small crews; contrastingly found ship's captains and mariners to be marionettes and martinets.

Monomoy endured a strange Janus-like split no less than our own human history did. Lifemen, fishermen, had oft been brave. Yet those pirates, mooncussers, desperate market hunters, weir plunderers existed. The people I had known here were pleasant waters over treacherous shoals; they were generous seas. They were a dual set of dynamics. They were dual sets of archetypes fissioned by scarcity of opportunity perhaps.

An odd combination of bravery with larceny in Cape character. What scarcity of resource, or sense of lawlessness cut people loose from rules then and now? Humans who feel that it is fine to use what is not theirs and give nothing back. Is this a desperate mentality of all coastal people?

Was the world now all a seacoast? Was it all Environmental or Genetic predestination, where the Spinner, Weaver and Cutter catch you in a net, nexus, graph of energies you cannot extricate yourself from?

On second thought, perhaps larceny coupled with bravery was a New World characteristic, if not a universal duality which eventually could compel certain kinds of over-generative or underactive men to generate civilization.

(Paradox: There are people whose rampant need to accumulate contributes to the eating up of the earth who nonetheless remain caring and gentle humans. There are people who live simple and natural, non-exploitative lives and they are cruel and bigoted. There are people who live simply, who are kind – and people who live materially who are cruel. There are those entirely the opposite from me in values who concern me. Yet somewhere I know there must be a balance between the way we practice our lives in the earth and the way we are within our hearts.)

If those who supposedly did good deeds, allowed their very good deeds to justify their cruelty to those whom they considered inferior, what then? Was a saved earth useful, if we still treated each other with contempt? Didn't that mean that the very negative impulses which had formed civilization in the first place would rise again, even if we created a soft-tech, renewable, balanced utopia in stasis and harmony with the earth – that is, that the self-righteous competitiveness which had let us justify each of our eras as "good" would once again abuse the earth and her gifts in order to prove itself "superior."

Loving A Place

A place is like a person because it embodies certain physical attributes, imagery you found appealing. It can be almost a substitute for the body and the warmth, experience of another human animal. If he was as elusive to understand as this shifting place, I could at least have the sensuality of heat and sand which embodied a lover. If I would no more have that, here I could at least have the lighthouse quietly swimming in ancient mirages, those heat waves of distance, the pleasurable expectation of an old friend, tangibly there to define.

Loving a person because they were like a place: He had been like the place that while ago. His hair was the same color as the marsh hay, eyes of the sea, body lean and taut as beach, stance slender and graceful as befitted the nautical past here. He was gracefully precarious, beautifully "free" – like the sunset terns rising, white flames, jumping up and down on these colored winds, even as the crisp leaflets of spring curled out under the arrival of lilac perfumes ashore.

Yet now he is completely forgotten as other loves take my heart.

The gulls dropped their mollusks, looked bemused when they did not open on their first crack. The ruckus was bewildering.

Escape

I paused to listen to the ocean, like something crushing out miles of silk, sighing.

Here on the isle, I could escape momentarily from pollutants, from adulterants, from the impurities which defiled the lands and which created personal and political corruptions. From the purified sands, cleansed by the exposure of light and of heat, I could seek purification and clarity of vision. I could sweat. I could try to keep my heart for sight and for intensity. I could walk over the crusts of brown algae, pretending the bison were crossing Beringia, that the earth was beginning again.

Then here was the noise overhead of airplanes, army jets. Of motors and fishing and pleasure crafts. Of police boats and Coast Guard vessels. The noise exhaled gases which stripped the sky of its protective membrane. The sun was becoming a terrible madness, not a soothing rational friend.

Here were the gulls and terns whose biology may be affected by PCBs as it once had been by DDT. PCBs could change the hormonal directions to an organism, masculinize it so that bonded lesbian terns and gulls mingled with the previous occasional natural female-female couples of mateless beginners practicing for the next year when they would find a male. Behavior would change, copulation, egg-laying. DDT made fish and birds "nervous" as well as thinning the eggshells of ospreys and peregrines. Pollutants in a marsh intensify in the flats' mucks, even as they are washed clean by the estuary's waters of salt

and fresh. Strontium 90 magnifies itself in clams and mussels. Oil spills can kill the humble algae waving at the basis of many an oceanic food chain. Oil spills blot out the light necessary for phytoplankton to proliferate, to feed the zooplankton which feeds the copepods which – all together now, rise up and down in columns inside the sea responding to light and dark, day and night, to feed the filter feeding whales, to feed the filter feeding mussels and clams.

This marsh was not drained nor polluted.

This marsh did not need to absorb so much toxic substance that finally it could no longer purify the water which fell and streamed into it, exchanging ions with the salt which flushed into it, or setting metals into it by the transportation of molecules of sulfur bacteria. The aquifer here wasn't threatened with losing its ability to filter out bad through the good auspices of the marsh. There was no paved over marsh here, leaving a formerly protected shoreline open to high seas and dissolving winds for flood to take the arrogant stick buildings man placed on earth as proclamations of permanence.

Here were none of the problems which could impinge eventually on the world of non-humans. Here one could blot out the fact that unless solutions were found to limit the religion of civilization with its terrible business, alleviate the terrible suffering of masses of men and women, children and forests and grasses and furred creatures, and seas and lakes and soils, there would be no sanctuary.

All the dedicated efforts of educators and artists of conservationists and biologists, of earth doctors and lawyers, would amount to...pick the metaphor yourself. One appropriate to the venue.

I wondered, shouldn't a democracy include those who were primed to question what we take for granted, who were not pleasant, who punctured possible illusion or tested it to see if it held a place for the odd and too full? If invention of our context's images sustained us, that was false. Images which could be punctured and last, endured...carried something true.

At the end of the process of civilization, success was determined not so much by force of character or talent as by being in the right group, popular, available at the right time. Success for those who are not of such unmistakable genius that they could not be missed often meant something not much more than mediocrity. Acceptable to the peers who give you permission to work or to love, this acceptability may be a matter of being "pleasant," being a member of a certain ethnic or socio-economic group; being a part of the turf; not posing a threat to any of the group; being both assertive and good enough to perform, but mediocre enough to conform without raising anybody's competitive hackles. Qualities of gamesmanship, charm replaced facts or labor so often. If we pass on this kind of character as inclusive fitness, what are we leaving to our future?

Those of us who have been lucky, have not suffered any real adversity or

denial do not understand those for whom circumstance has placed love and fulfillment out of reach. Some humans have been disadvantaged by their own inadequacies to be sure, but shouldn't there be a place for them?

Humans, even as with other biological organisms, are, in complex societies, often not freed to fulfillment, but paradoxically more likely to be denied a chance than in societies with simpler structures of outward life. The assassination of a chance at love creates a hatred; of a chance at achievement, creates failure. The self-justifying demeanor we carry when we win is a bit like the pilgrims proclaiming that the sickness which destroyed many of the natives and left their land open for the taking was god's will. It is not fair to say that it is all in the hands of the individual, just as unfair to state presumptuously that it is all god's will.

As Ruth Benedict pointed out, one man's culture is another man's poison. Not everyone should have to live according to a huge monocultural norm.

So, there we have not cooperation, but competition; not nurture (an earthen, grounded word made recently popular) and respect, but resentment and destructiveness. Perhaps this was all any modern relationship had to offer. It was all I usually saw – men and women as ornithologist Frank Gill commented – married for common interests, turning into archrivals as the marriage progressed and the egos were exposed.

In a candlelight dusk, sensuality bounding, hands eager for the line and hook...
birds at his hands and shoulders, "wild" as a furred canid, enveloped in fur, low to the ground.
and then, commodification of our adult lives – it is all lost.
A deadness enters, the flutter of imagery shrouding us departs; we are visionless.
This is civilization: a dissection, cutting of our own organs to accommodate survival.

The earth is my shepherd i shall not want, I lie me down in green pastures, she delivers me from evil
Force of ocean, of rocks, of sand
unite,
visions east and west

41

Song

Always on Monomoy, I could escape the thoughts at last. I could sit here without engaging in the competitiveness, the overenergized activity which vied for turf, vied for recognition. I could pretend to be Thoreau in the last hut on the island.

"The refuge is famous for shorebird migrations."

Birds, up like the sea foam.

This place, its story, was made by the pummeling of the seas, the workings of the winds and salt and weathers on sand.

(Again) these forces beat out its (oxymoronically permanent transitoriness), its history, even as they made its natural history.

The sands change with a life of their own, amoeba-like.

North Island is more barren, tundra-like, a place where space itself takes you, a flatland of spartina patens, of sea lavender, of mud flats with orchid colored Sulphur bacteria, edged by dunes of exposed sand, dunes cluttered with seaside goldenrod, beach grass Ammophila (latin for "it likes the sand"), dusty miller containing an oil-like rainbow in its dull-green bisected basal leaves. A place where gulls nest. A place where peregrines hoist up their beginners' wings and pretend to be fierce: seeing, in the pearl-light of autumn, a group of seven – two of a sudden rising over my head, razoring through the clear air towards a sanderling; low over the marsh, the sanderling evaded, twisted, spirited itself up – five other falcons joining in pursuit almost crashed into each other, eager, losing their impetus; disappeared. The two instigators landed, looking at me, ruffling hunched shoulders, embarrassed.

Sanderlings and peeps, toasted, freckled from too much sun? Did their feathers burn in a mythological time of evolution, and peeling off pigment, did the speckling which is their inheritance now appear? Oystercatchers whistle. Willets, spreading their white "W" wing-bands out from drabness, rise up from short marsh hay, panicky, crying their name over and over again when they are flushed by us. Prima donna terns retch their ratchetty distaste for us and dive-bomb our heads. Feel rather blue that they don't know me for a friend. As my

great horned owls do.

Birds on the South Island also are coming home, not necessarily to nest, but to pass through a familiar friend of a place: the ducks seek Little and Big Station ponds for discrete water tucked away in the southwest. That summer least terns drop their eggs out from under their compact white with black capped, masked selves. Tucked bodies, neatly settling onto their scrapes, they rise again in mad balletic flight, accompanied by widika wickida sounds; sounds like piglets playing the comb; return to settle...porte de bras, arabesque, and down; frappe' out the sand with your foot. The next summer, towards its end, an avocet strayed in migration, its oriental rune ending up making a defining statement in one of the ponds, creating advocacy.

Freckled birds on North Island dangle their landing gear, drop down from the skies for a landing. Peeps, like the synchronized sanderlings, freshening into a whiter plumage for winter, change to toastier spring tones. Turnstone, assertively colored in rust with black, aggressively turns (those ruddy few) stones. Black supine question marks are the bellies of those (black-bellied) plovers; red knots flushed with iron color modestly probe. The clouds are quickening, misty, furry, dim, gravid with rain. Algid-still, the breezes bring up a whiff of algal replication.

Marbled shorebirds, sandpipers, turnstones, plovers, dunlin, turning, pecking, their bills varied lengths to probe for varied insects, crustaceans, larvae, worms in the mudflats, have returned from their quick breeding season in the arctic tundra, in the land of the Cree. Gold-cinnamon whimbrels hunched in mellowing August, in pear toned dusk, are whistling like a Yeats poem. (Fall is dragged in behind them.) Black scoters make a charcoal on the outline on the deep fall edge of the seas. Scoters coming in cold skies, thrown across the clouds like a line of jacks assembling into an anchor. (Winter announced.) Thick bodied eider in black and white make a thin sky substantial with shining life. The sea runs like the lean body of a fox with its tail out. The sopranos o0unds of shorebirds and the bass rhythms of sea merge. The scents of algae and salt and sand mingle with the sky's freshness.

Mudflats changing to rainbows as the sun descends, swing the watcher upwards landless, spilling up into the speckled, sandy, flapping bellies. (Pirouetting to try to mimic flight.) Bringing the special excitement of migration with them. (The characteristic pennant, action of seasons, unrolls backwards for me.) Tawny, buttery summer tones, disappearing as the charcoal ellipse smudge from a dunlin's underside, are blanching out, carrying slow speaking cold, loosening rain.

A change. A "sea-change."

The grey and aqua flat sea-eyes changing with their temperament of weathers seek their reflection in the heavens. "Leanmeangreen" is the ocean in a war of early rain; in a calm of balmy summer it is a spiritual turquoise. Sunsets swing in jazz tones over the clam flats, siphons squirting, embouchures under the crust of mud.

(Around me in the waters on the way out in very early spring, are dog-like harbor seals, playing a game with the boat – popping up, eying us, sideways sidling into the slide of beach into the water; harbor seals rising up out of the short seas to box with each other, a pre-courtship play before some return to northern waters.)

And in the pond-sand of South Island, tracks of furtive muskrats. (Are there really jumping meadow mice here?)

And when they landed did the "wingeds" inhale the algid green scent and bend thankful their beaks to kiss this privacy? Did they hear other frequencies, and perceive different collations of light, translucency as intense as quartz and tourmaline? From high up in the ceiling of the skies, across the broad table of continents, they swarm, come together, aligning, following patterns set before the last glacier, looking down at us, at movements of herds, at white caps and rapids of clouds, surrounded by filtered refractions of ice crystals, pufferies, hide and seek suns, planets attached like mobiles to stars. Spangled with moonlight, they attached themselves to magnetism and to vision, to light and to a speck down there, remembered. Instinctively, by a plot engineered on the genetic code, as by learning too, they guide themselves above the world we know.

Heat haze, air shooting upwards under the wings of heavier raptors, lets them dangle like lures cast upwards into space; suspended by the presence of slender unseeable air under the variously evolved curves of their wings. Each wing and bill and claw is adapted to a certain habitat, certain habits in time. Gliding, then buckling their wings in – and here out of the atmosphere to us.

Warmth. In the grasses in front of the lighthouse. Everything can be forgotten for a time: ambition, necessity, disappointment, the gods of ego and talent which make a life of luck for some – for the rest of us, the unlucky, less proficient, can find the solace of a sun divorced from the motorings of land. Resting near the Sueda, pushing up from sand which hides a war-time nickel. (Which war, which time, which planet?)

Over there, the brisk, stiff branches of bayberry, the tufted deep green (mallard-lush here) of pitch pines and a few of the planted Scots and red pines; down a valley the color of a golden hind, a deer with antlers, autumnally grand, perceives me. His doe comes up slowly, the skin fitting over the speed inherent,

inferred, in her musculature, ready, inquiring. First man, first woman. Stippled and dappled (Hopkins dactylic), smooth and tawny. Tucked away here, like deer in copses of antlered cherry, stot scrub oak, shadbush and arrowwood. Passerines pause, lose balance on a special twig, sweetly peruse their view: yellow rump, yellowthroat. Song sparrow calls in the thick warmth with his hoarse notes.

I walk, land-bound, delighting in the scent of the tidal marsh; the revealed nudity of low-tide – the female scent of clams and worms under the surface. Braced by an upland flat, a firmer earth, here the land becomes mixed. An identity half of North Island – (the island that is sure in its motion and its vulnerability that it belongs to the shore and the sea) – half of land – as if this South half does have pretensions of becoming something more substantial, landed; sheltering. As the precarious shifting position of the lighthouse itself shows, with its sands pared off and tapped back on by elementals, this is just a mix of water, salt and winds with some sand – daring plants to root here at their risk. (Destroying and recreating itself.) Here's a mixed group of shore plants - the pudgy patent-leather green seed cases of rocket, the slightly fleshy leaves of a possible sea-purslane; the straggling of some spear-grasses of S. alterniflora intermingled with the surprise of Sonchus, the heart of its leaves clasped lovingly around the stalk, the yellow head of a nearby wild lettuce, tufted white, going to seed. There's, could it be, cleavers? straggling, white-flowered waif. And stepping through land, which though sandy, seemed male, moored tight, stable, there was Ammophila again, then some panic grass – a marker of transition zones from watery to dry, from foot to knee of the land – "panicked" as one little girl I had on a nature walk said after I explained this – "because it was afraid of the water." In lower ground rises fleabane, purple, brushy with fringe, said by Indians to repel insects. Tasseled groundsel assembles its doll mops, nearby. Across an inlet's a panne, green glass fingers of edible Salicornia which will turn crimson when the goldenrods fluster and cluster and take over their many niches further on in the fall. Above it twines a clot of bare sand with desert-like, cactus-like, saltwort which pricks the skin. It seems somehow brutish next to the feminine, neatly triangulated leaves of seabeach orache.

Up past the lighthouse hundreds of beach heather tussocks had spread to flare; yellow flowers making the depression a mustard color, so elusively, so quickly before the few salt spray roses will bloom to pink and white, that they are like butterflies.

Hanging my arms down to make me more four-legged, I climb that way more easily to the highest dune. Possible hoary elfins butterflies, stained tobacco color, skip skeptically onto a patch of sand where there is no bearberry for them. Painted ladies in orange and black migrate through. In fall, those

cloisonne enameled green darner dragonflies horde and hunt on their migration over the yellowing land. Lying in the golden wing of the island's uplift, I am a bird child, the place is a bigger bird, its wings embracing me. Outlooking past the dunes over the eastern western southern waters, a deer springs below; now joined by a few, like tan waterfalls. You are the buck sheathed in dusk, come to collect me for the winds; to run up and down the stiff valleys, the soft sands with me; to nibble the grasses in a dream shadow. I remember the dead deer, shot needlessly through the neck, and left to rot, not gathered for food. The four of us looked and spoke, one of us the prayer that the deer "to beauty return, by the turquoise hand to return." The place, ocean, sky, stopped breath for a moment. Something sacred arose out of the carcass to bless us, something lean and scarce.

Something jumps, a grasshopper or cricket, evolved to be pale as the sand. On the outer beach too, those Mexican jumping beans of amphipods, the beach fleas, half shrimp, half bug, defy catching.

In November, across this stippled and bearded dune drift and on and out to an undefined sea, arctic white gannets plunge, protected by their helmeted skulls, dive deep, cooperatively, staying under with their increased volume of air-sac; beckoning me back to Bonaventure to hear their shamanic ecstatic nesting chirr.

North Island. Picking up a piece of fur with a beak and its legs struck up in the air at me, female reaction: OHHH, its sooo cute. Wanting to snuggle it to death. Letting it go, walking bowlegged – its wings still stubby, flightless – away. You wouldn't believe what a close call I had with a human, gramma, but I scared her off. The gulls on both pieces are pushing out the terns, yes, maybe it is just that constant woofing and crying which offends the chirring terns. Arriving earlier on their nesting ground, they outcompete them with aggression, usurping their nest sites in the sands, eating chicks and eggs.

Again, the land slipping out from me as the seas come in. Happy algae waving green in tidal pools, tickled by water. Sea-Grasses, mollusks, crabs, sucking nutrients out of the salty solution, even as whales do. Even as I was out of the moisture in the air (my skin tightening from wind and salt, too brisk UVs).

It was my intent as a nonscientist to reinvest non-sense into nature (at least for myself), to animate everything with its own kind of consciousness (as if standing in the sun for so long a time that the brilliance infused your eyes with another kind of sight); to believe as the primal men did (hunting with long harpoons near here for small whales out of dugouts, in blue winds, when the seas were higher, and lower, and the Cape moors coupled with amethyst

shadows of space; tracking the mastodon, finding bravery against a wily purple ice) – that everything was inhabited with a soul.

(And where were the souls of the dead whales now?)

To interpret the puzzles of botany for instance, to nail the names onto the plants, ONLY so that I might understand how they companioned other plants and places, soils and sands dryness and wetness, salts and times, seasons and creatures. What was everything to everything? (Beloved). How did the loss of these bangled black rushes limit the life of those elf-brush Andropogon over there, in this particular road of taller grasses cut in between the beach heather and the sea? (What did they say when the wind flattened them; what did the rushes speak?)

What friendly vegetation was the foot of the place, which the knee and thigh and shoulder? The components make up the whole: Individualism working as a body, an organism, a completion.

Yet, different worlds with different ways, reactions to circumstance (equals adaptation). Alternate purposes. And... commonalities of breed, eat, sleep, keep warm.

Pleasurable life – exposure to danger – but within that is aliveness (like that shadow within the sun). "Close to the bone." Dead bird here. In the shadow of itself.

Freedom = sensuality, in this springy, boggy, awakening. Jumping with the moving peat. Stroking the mane of the friendly land…watersslipping away from me, rising into air

Near Inward Point, garnet stems, beryl leaves of wild cranberry, a wild bouncing carpet over the trampoline of peat. On the wonderful (unexpectedly) dry distance of South Island, from east to west: patches, pockets of revelry and escape: Various textures for the carrying of my body via my feet: bunchy short shrubs scraping me near lakes dipped like wrought iron rakes, like African shrubbery; springy upland dune-backs' curves of beach heather; the slow stepping which sand makes; other impassable thickets of low bayberry and catbriers; dryer wildflower fields brushy with grass their paths a miniature valley; the flat briskness of hard mud; the slosh of boots through seawater to the metal boat. Birds may fly, but they may miss the wonder of their feet's experience. (Is this why they so often look down at them?)

Intensity, reality, living essentially – not separated out, filleted like bone from flesh – not poisoning the body in order to feel good mending it – not living compartmentalized, rarefied, weakened, divorced from the land. What would I need to live here?

So quiet here. Slushing ocean. Wind in the reeds. I could feel again what it was

like to have been a sunwarm, feathery sanderling, or a coyote or a fox (though they did not live here, as neither did the man-controlled exterminated Vixen). To have my nose to the ground and eat a flower, to roll on my back, to fetch my own meal, feel my heavy fur thicken with glossiness as I grew in health – waiting to pounce – to fetch mice for my young, to paw out my own den and to have a mate with me who did the same. To reproduce joyously. To cringe at the lightning, to linger in the scentmusk of summer; not to have to give time over to non-essentials, to objects, to viewing others living behind glass. Immediate. (Supine, spying on Marvel's clouds, riding upside down, over on top of surf; unbungled from my earthly body, seal.)

I wanted to partake of the place and by that learn about being an animal. To become as they were, able to tend for their own, able to defend, capable of gentleness and war. From there to learn to be human, from the ground up. I wanted to be part of the shadows of the copses, part of the strange colors on the twilight sands. Part of the distance. To take it back; to hear the elders chant the moon; to let this piece of history pass. Proud Anciency.

In this land without roads, I could be a thousand miles away in a paradise lost, a freedom lost, if freedom is independence from the demands of needs others impose on you. Material needs. Not needs of the heart. Yes, nature imposed limits. But they were of a different realm. Needs others imposed: to hide from claws; to starve when the Peromyscus population dropped because there was drought and the seeds and grasses were so few; to die in the egg, too hot, or wilt from exposure, too cold and wet; yet even then, safe from trespass in a self-reliant security. The more the material needs, the less the demands of the heart mean.

Glad for the greenness, as it seems to be glad for itself, for the golden growing grasses here.

(I liked to list, but also to listen, taste, smell, inquire, hear.)

(My black-haired friend's like an otter amongst the fingerling, cranky-looking Fowler's toads, ear to the waters.) Sun-honest bareness lost to a smothering dew – a deception of fog: (cold in the center of the heat, darkness in the pupil of the light).

Snowy egrets, whose plumes were sought for hats, once almost exterminated, phantoms of long-necked feathery fog, appearing, disappearing, clinging to the long grasses' arcs, their wings blankets for deft, tiny angels. Black-crowned night herons lurk in the trees, half tree-snake, half bird, rakish spot of a black beret tilted on their heads. Rake-toed green herons play the mud like Glen Gould, poised in suspended animation. Clots of cloud-like angels descending, trailing their destinies' whispers...hanging themselves amongst usnea on tilted, geometric branches. (How cold it could be, particularly at North Island.) What was it like to stay warm at Inward Station next to the cast iron ornate stove,

to eat a stew of clams and haddock, fresh roast duck when your shift to cook came and you were allowed to have your wife with you to do it in your place? Hezekiah Doane in his navy blues and whites and brass buttons, keeper of the Chatham station in 1896 when the Orcutt went down; was that his pretty wife with those surfmen in their whites and jaunty caps? Biscuits butter corn brought in from shore through fog; cold and down comforters; wetness. Gilded. Warmth and relief.

I think of the inlets and channels, the marsh grass and knolls, the laced cuffs of tavern keepers, horsemen, pirates, privateers. Of the English era. Of the Americans. Of coming into being through invention after the Civil War, of the new pirates stealing the wilderness from us all to convert it to currency. An island detached in the age of the self-centered Flappers, an island attached in the age of the Great Depression, resulting from decades of selfishness. Over the wash of space we came, they came, you came. Some were tolerant and open-minded. Some were piratical and prejudiced. Yet after the piracy, they will need the mercy of the lands they have changed and the elements they have scorned; and after the prejudice you will need the help of the people you have denigrated. (And after the self-indulgent consumption and the self-conscious supposed selflessness of the acknowledged "goodly" ...?)

Was there a time when places like this cleansed our souls so well that our alliances to honor and to our fellow beings were more acute? Or had we become so televised that no matter how much we could come to an islet like this, we still returned to a reality invented for us by a culture, a system, a set of religious beliefs which Stupidified America? If we could not see past our defensive set of preconceptions to even discuss differences, then we were no longer a democracy. And inevitably materialist cultures thus "objectified" us: scalpels paring us from any fat of emotional courageousness, draining out our animal vigor, divorcing us from the excitement of the Immediate. We endured heaving dangers, even as we had pirated. If we were once brave, now we were perhaps simply larcenous, as we exited from the outdoors, male strength of the proficient hunter in the open lands, towards the fearfulness of submissive planters, towards the wiliness of mercantilism, into the age of scarcity, of minutia metallica trampling down upon us.

Did Monomoy write me in then, to see a change? Looking back from here to land – the technology which kept us distanced from our bodies and from each other, the resources which too, for our survival, were distanced and becoming scarcer and more dirtied, attached us more securely to the hierarchies which we had supposedly escaped from by leaving Old Worlds, as much as any villein. Needing to bend to their dominations for our survival, needing to prove ourselves by them perhaps more than any villein. Technology was supposed to

democratize us, liberate us from hierarchy, yet it wired us to it by multiplying our needs while subtracting us from our bodily abilities while dividing us from the weathers' and the hearty earth's matrices.

Is this why no place of escape could change us back?

Perhaps it was a female attribute, but I saw little difference between crow picking his feet over there; or the nibbling hand sized carnivores, or coyote and me. Mechanism alone was useful for opossums or other extensive breeders as my last love, writer P.M. had pointed out. But for others, to feel and to reason (to some extent) could be adaptive.

A thick slip of rain-grey sea could treat us to privacy. What was the disease in our souls which made us have to separate ourselves out from other beings, from a sensory and survival attachment to the actions of the earth and sea? What lack in our effectiveness made us have to prove ourselves "superior?" The sea could slip into each sense to unify us with the senses of other beings, with their souls, in a communion permeating us from the mists.

In a place like this, the madness which was our telepathy, our vision, our sense of aliveness, could be exposed and intensified to give us insight for a course of action. Yet who knelt under the antlered sumac to the sea edge in a sacred dusk to thank the strange rhythms? Who had the wing-ed fearlessness? All exposure did to us in this age was make us fear the light, run for cover to the safety of the habitual on land.

The Indians calmed by an inward fog, against enemies were seasoned in the heat of the vapor hut; fire warmed; knew the season by what it offered in sequential places; by what they needed from them - fire to make warm; returning dun antelope; peeling lodgepoles; spiraling, relocating fishes. It is the time of mud, or the reddish hunter's moon. The time when shorebirds return; the time when ducks nest; the time when willets bemoan like hunger itself; the time when eider raft. The time when winds blow and speak of winter. It is, by those, the time shadbush and wild cherry bloom; the time when snappers run, the time when crabapples ripen, the time when bayberries are gathered, or beach plums.

Upland and downland, outland and in, each place in its season;

time harvest/ing.

The body of the land gives itself to the body of man in communion. How we have lost that paradise, that strong eye to eye clarity – something to protect – and for what?

Like a lung or a heart is the heart of the land out here, filtering out impurities, cleansing the waters; revising and refreshing thee, the oceans around it; nursing, releasing from the detritus of marsh grass and muck healthy scents of life;

healthy blooms of new plankton out of the nutrients of decay and algae (our relatives with the "way backteria," waiting for our return) into the seas; into the tidal creeks for hatchling neurotic crabs, for larvae, insects, glass shrimps, menhaden, eels passing each other, for baby fish going back out to the ocean, for larger sparkling fish off the barrier isle itself. There is less nourishment for the sea beings without this spit. If she were to be turned off by an oil spill - one less provender rich with the improvisations for her place in time. (One more beautiful being destroyed for the future by the present artificial.)

Near the tip, two metal signals in triangles of red and white, used as navigational signals, look like modern sculpture or signposts for benign aliens. And the Craft camp's last shell of a cabin at Inward Point. The cabin here would see a sunset like no other over the inlets: awash in painted fire. Someone had defecated in the bunkroom. A new window was broken. (Yet I could be simple, living with my propane and kerosene, my bow and my arrows of "burning gold.")

What a sorrow violence did. Yet the course of the hunt, the dance of caribou to wolf (as Barry Lopez saw it), waiting to cure it of age and illness, was not a sorrow but an exaltation. A translation into a new being.

The consciousness of eagles passing here could redefine us, could we but understand them.

Here then was beauty for its own sake, unnamed, and not completely understood. I did not even want to know the names of canvasback and scaup and bufflehead and pintail and teal. The stripes and blots of satiny cinnamons, velvet greens, crisp taffeta blacks, silken whites, iridescence shining like phosphorescent shoals were enough; the allusion to pothole country and to tufts of bunchgrass and pejin grasses used as shelter in the fall, hunting with special arrows in the wide west – my senses alert, nares open, alive, waiting again.

Now this place could take me into my own past; a place grasped
as it once was…
transfer me to other beings. This, here was all I needed to know.
LSR Mar. 24,'91

Informal and Partial Bibliography

With immense gratitude I thank the late Eleanor Henderson, Curator Chatham Historical Society, Atwood House Museum for the papers she donated to me with her invaluable notes, recollections, and photos of the Brant Club; of the resort at Middletown, near the "old" Lifesaving station; of Moy in general; her notes on Dalton. (Copies of which I gave back to same historical society and to Tom Buckley, book dealer, Chatham.)

The book "Land's Edge," coincidentally discussed the universality of a barrier beach's persona; its cultural evolution as inevitable for "malcontents," for pasture, pirates, ecological exploitation. "The Sierra Club Guide to the Mid Atlantic," discusses barriers' universal ecology. "Monomoy Wilderness," lays out an outline of its history and natural history. However, the sources upon which I draw, many of which are mentioned in context, number in the hundreds. Due to the limitations of a small press, extensive chapter annotations are not included. In some but not all cases I have listed a source as primary.

Libraries used include Cape Cod National Seashore HQ; Chatham Historical Society, Atwood House Museum; Eldredge Library, Chatham, MA.; the Kittredge Collections at Sturgis Library, Barnstable, MA; The William Brewster Nickerson Cape Cod History Archives, Wilkens Library, Cape Cod Community College, Barnstable, MA.; Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth, MA.; Plymouth Plantation library, Plymouth, MA; Widener Library, Harward University; Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution files.

Vertical Files related to Monomoy:

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Charts, maps of Monomoy and environs, and eastern US

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lee Stephanie Roscoe is a longtime New England journalist, commended environmentalist, Woods Hole Ocean Science Journalism Fellow, and playwright, living on Cape Cod.

Praise for author Lee Roscoe's
Wampanoag Art for the Ages, Traditional and Transitional
"That human element is the book's key stroke of genius." The Vineyard Gazette

Praise for writer/director Lee Roscoe's *Dreams from a Planet in Peril*, filmed and produced by Janet Murphy Robertson
"This is an important piece of art. It's a powerful and moving film, amplifying the causes and outcomes of a planet in peril from four unexpected vantage points…filled with accurate and persuasive facts." Benton Jones, *Director of Art, Cape Cod Museum of Art*

Follow the phases of history and interlinked ecology on Monomoy: Geologic, Native American, Colonial, Pastoral, Maritime, Mercantile, Military, Tourism and Modern Conservation. View the history of Cape Cod and America through the lens of Monomoy, interspersed with personal observations of a place in nature and time.

This book is supported in part by a grant from the Chatham Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Praise for *Dreaming Monomoy's Past, Walking its Present*

"A fascinating excursion into the nature and history of one of the world's great sea islands by a poet who has taken the place to heart." Christopher Leahy, author of *The Birdwatcher's Companion*

"With her prodigious command of Monomoy's history, flora, fauna, and more, Lee paints an intricate and kaleidoscopic picture of one treasured American place and creates, in the process, a fascinating window into the story of America itself. A truly amazing work and a must-read!" Janet Murphy Robertson, filmmaker, president of artistsandmusicans.org

"Roscoe is the Cape's cultural ecologist," James Gould, professor, author and historian

"*Dreaming Monomoy's Past, Walking Its Present*, is engaging, informative. As alive & multisensory as a book can get! I could imagine smelling, viewing, hearing, tasting, feeling the environment through Lee Roscoe's knowledge & gifted word descriptions. It is comprehensive, encompassing natural history, cultural history, geography, geology, botany, animals, much more." Jill Putnam, naturalist and education expert

"It has been a delight to share passages of this book with my students. Lee Roscoe writes with great knowledge about the ecological richness of Monomoy. Rays of historical, cultural, and scientific knowledge pass often through her poetic prism, and scatter in always interesting directions, while the names and spirit of things are remembered energetically and lovingly." Rand Burkert, author, teacher, ecological activist, musician

"Monomoy is my favorite place on earth. Lee Roscoe's vivid prose captures the majesty and drama of this little-known place, from the whipping wind of the storms and the shipwrecks breaking against its shores, to its nature. Let Lee be your captain as you navigate Monomoy in space and history." Topher Mira, local naturalist and arborist